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BY I. D'ISRAELI.

IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

Second Edition.

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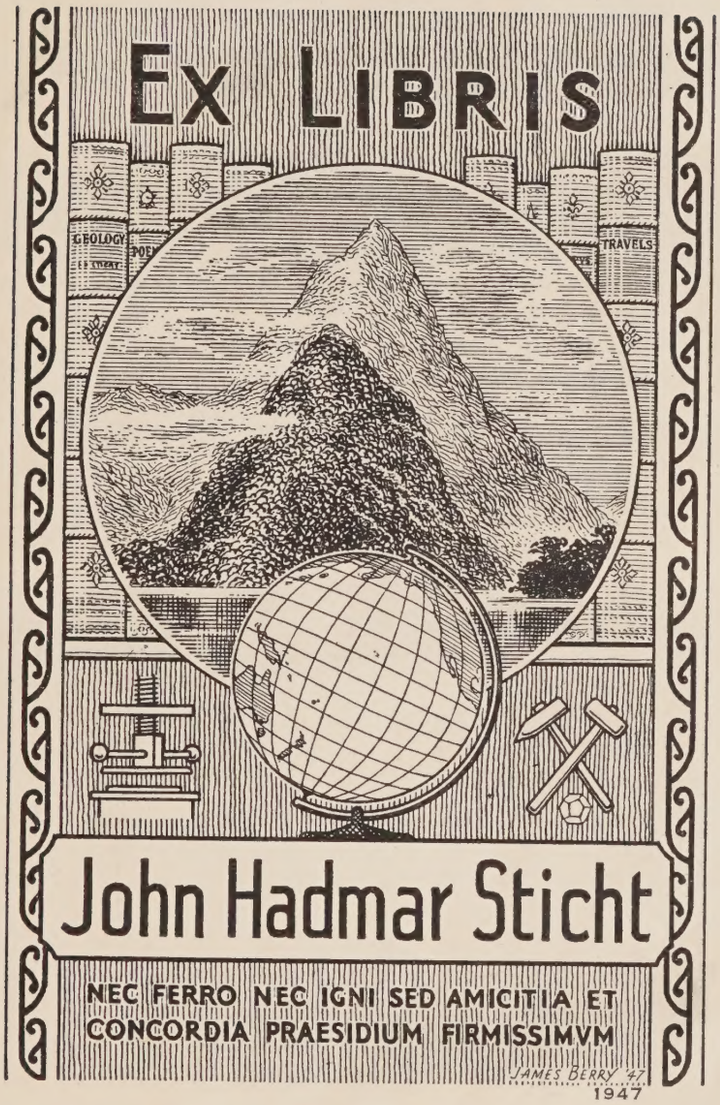
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A

SECOND SERIES

OF

CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE:

CONSISTING OF

RESEARCHES IN LITERARY, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND POLITICAL HISTORY;

OF

CRITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRIES;

AND OF

SECRET HISTORY.

BY I. D'ISRAELI.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.
1824.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

PREFACE.

It may be useful to state the design of the present volumes, which differ in their character from the preceding Series.

The form of essay-writing, were it now moulded even by the hand of the Raphael of Essayists, would fail in the attraction of novelty; Morality would now in vain repeat its counsels in a fugitive page, and Manners now offer but little variety to supply one. The progress of the human mind has been marked by the enlargement of our knowledge; and essay-writing seems to have closed with the century which it charmed and enlightened.

I have often thought that an occasional recurrence to speculations on human affairs, as they appear in private and in public history, and to other curious inquiries in literature and philosophy, would form some substitute for this mode of writing. These Researches, therefore, offer authentic knowledge for evanescent topics; they attempt to demonstrate some general principle, by induction from a variety of particulars—to develop those imperfect truths which float obscurely in the mind—and to suggest subjects, which, by their singularity, are new to inquiry, and which may lead to new trains of ideas. Such Researches will often form supplements to our previous knowledge.

In accustoming ourselves to discoveries of this nature, every research seems to yield the agreeable feeling of invention—it is a pleasure peculiar to itself—some-

thing which we ourselves have found out—and which, whenever it imparts novelty or interest to another, communicates to him the delight of the first discoverer.

These Volumes in the present Edition, having a few pages less in number than the former, it may therefore be necessary to observe that, except some corrections, the Author has had no occasion to make any omissions; at the same time, that he has inserted many additions in their respective subjects.

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CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

A NEW SERIES.

MODERN LITERATURE—BAYLE'S CRITICAL DICTIONARY.

A NEW Edition of Bayle in France is now in a progressive state of publication; an event in literary history which could not have been easily predicted. Every work which creates an epoch in literature is one of the great monuments of the human mind; and Bayle may be considered as the father of literary curiosity, and of Modern Literature. Much has been alleged against our author: yet let us be careful to preserve what is precious. Bayle is the inventor of a work which dignified a collection of facts constituting his text, by the argumentative powers and the copious illustrations which charm us in his di-

versified commentary. Conducting the humble pursuits of an Aulus Gellius and an Athenæus with a higher spirit he, showed us the *philosophy of Books*, and communicated to such limited researches a value which they had otherwise not possessed.

This was introducing a study perfectly distinct from what is pre-eminently distinguished as "classical learning," and the subjects which had usually entered into philological pursuits. Ancient literature, from century to century, had constituted the sole labours of the learned; and "variæ lectiones" were long their pride and their reward. Latin was the literary language of Europe. The vernacular idiom in Italy was held in such contempt that their youths were not suffered to read Italian books, their native productions; Varchi tells a curious anecdote of his father sending him to prison, where he was kept on bread and water, as a penance for his inveterate passion for reading Italian books! Dante was reproached by the erudite Italians for composing in his mother-tongue, still expressed by the degrading designation of *il volgare*, which the "resolute" John Florio renders "to make common;"

and to translate was contemptuously called *volgarizzare ;* while Petrarch rested his fame on his Latin poetry, and called his Italian *nugellas vulgares !* With us, Roger Ascham was the first who boldly avowed " *To speak as the common people,* to think as wise men ;" yet, so late as the time of Bacon, this great man did not consider his " Moral Essays" as likely to last in the moveable sands of a modern language, for he has anxiously had them sculptured in the marble of ancient Rome. Yet what had the great ancients themselves done, but trusted to their own *volgare?* The Greeks, the finest and most original writers of the ancients, observes Adam Ferguson, " were unacquainted with every language but their own; and if they became learned, it was only by studying what they themselves had produced."

During fourteen centuries, whatever lay out of the pale of classical learning was condemned as barbarism ; in the mean while, however, amidst this barbarism, another literature was insensibly creating itself in Europe. Every people, in the gradual accessions of their vernacular genius, discovered a new sort of knowledge, one which more deeply interested their feelings and the times,

reflecting the image, not of the Greeks and the Latins, but of themselves! A spirit of inquiry, originating in events which had never reached the ancient world, and the same refined taste in the arts of composition caught from the models of antiquity, at length raised up rivals, who competed with the great ancients themselves; and Modern Literature now occupies a space which looks to be immensity, compared with the narrow and the imperfect limits of the ancient. A complete collection of classical works, all the bees of antiquity, may be hived in a glass case; but those we should find only the milk and honey of our youth; to obtain the substantial nourishment of European knowledge, a library of ten thousand volumes will not satisfy our inquiries, nor supply our researches even on a single topic!

Let not, however, the votaries of ancient literature dread its neglect, nor be over-jealous of their younger and Gothic sister. The existence of their favourite study is secured, as well by its own imperishable claims, as by the stationary institutions of Europe. But one of those silent revolutions in the intellectual history of mankind, which are not so obvious as those in their politi-

cal state, seems now fully accomplished. The very term "classical," so long limited to the ancient authors, is now equally applicable to the most elegant writers of every literary people; and although Latin and Greek were long characterized as "the learned languages," yet we cannot in truth any longer concede that those are the most learned who are "inter Græcos Græcissimi, inter Latinos Latinissimi," any more than we can reject from the class of "the learned," those great writers, whose scholarship in the ancient classics may be very indifferent. The modern languages now have also become learned ones, when he who writes in them is imbued with their respective learning. He is a "learned" writer who has embraced most knowledge on the particular subject of his investigation, as he is a "classical" one who composes with the greatest elegance. Sir David Dalrymple dedicates his "Memorials relating to the History of Britain" to the Earl of Hardwicke, whom he styles with equal happiness and propriety, "LEARNED in British History." "Scholarship" has hitherto been a term reserved for the adept in ancient literature, whatever may be the mediocrity of his intellect;

but the honourable distinction must be extended to all great writers in modern literature, if we would not confound the natural sense and propriety of things.

Modern literature may, perhaps, still be discriminated from the ancient, by a term it began to be called by at the Reformation, that of "the New Learning." Without supplanting the ancient, the modern must grow up with it; the farther we advance in society, it will more deeply occupy our interests; and it has already proved what Bacon, casting his philosophical views retrospectively and prospectively, has observed, "that Time was the greatest of innovators."

When Bayle projected his "Critical Dictionary," he probably had no idea that he was about effecting a revolution in our libraries, and founding a new province in the dominion of human knowledge; creative genius often is itself the creature of its own age: it is but that re-action of public opinion, which is generally the forerunner of some critical change, or which calls forth some want which sooner or later will be supplied. The predisposition for the various, but neglected literature, and the curious, but the

scattered knowledge, of the Moderns, which had long been increasing, with the speculative turn of inquiry, prevailed in Europe, when BAYLE took his pen to give the thing itself a name and an existence. But the great authors of modern Europe were not yet consecrated beings, like the ancients, and their volumes were not read from the chairs of universities; yet the new interests which had arisen in society, the new modes of human life, the new spread of knowledge, the curiosity after even the little things which concern us, the revelations of secret history, and the state-papers which have sometimes escaped from national archives, the philosophical spirit which was hastening its steps and raising up new systems of thinking; all alike required research and criticism, inquiry and discussion. BAYLE had first studied his own age, before he gave the public his great work.

"If BAYLE," says Gibbon, "wrote his dictionary to empty the various collections he had made, without any particular design, he could not have chosen a better plan. It permitted him every thing, and obliged him to nothing. By the double freedom of a dictionary and of notes, he

could pitch on what articles he pleased, and say what he pleased in those articles."

"*Jacta est alea!*" exclaimed BAYLE, on the publication of his dictionary, as yet dubious of the extraordinary enterprise; perhaps while going on with the work, he knew not at times, whither he was directing his course; but we must think, that in his own mind he counted on something, which might have been difficult even for BAYLE himself to have developed. The author of the "Critical Dictionary" had produced a voluminous labour, which, to all appearance, could only rank him among compilers and reviewers, for his work is formed of such materials as they might use. He had never studied any science; he confessed that he could never demonstrate the first problem in Euclid, and to his last day ridiculed that sort of evidence called mathematical demonstration. He had but little taste for classical learning, for he quotes the Latin writers curiously, not elegantly; and there is reason to suspect that he had entirely neglected the Greek. Even the erudition of antiquity usually reached him by the ready medium of some German Commentator. His multifarious

reading was chiefly confined to the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With such deficiencies in his literary character, BAYLE could not reasonably expect to obtain pre-eminence in any single pursuit. Hitherto his writings had not extricated him from the secondary ranks of literature, where he found a rival at every step; and without his great work, the name of BAYLE at this moment had been buried among his controversialists, the rabid Jurieu, the cloudy Jacquelot, and the envious Le Clerc; to these, indeed, he sacrificed too many of his valuable days, and was still answering them, at the hour of his death. Such was the cloudy horizon of that bright fame which was to rise over Europe! BAYLE, intent on escaping from all beaten tracks, while the very materials he used promised no novelty, for all his knowledge was drawn from old books, opened an eccentric route, where at least he could encounter no parallel; BAYLE felt that if he could not stand alone, he would only have been an equal by the side of another. Experience had more than once taught this mortifying lesson; but he was blest with the genius which could stamp an inimitable originality on a folio.

This originality seems to have been obtained in this manner. The exhausted topics of classical literature he resigned as a province not adapted to an ambitious genius; sciences he rarely touched on, and hardly ever without betraying superficial knowledge, and involving himself in absurdity: but in the history of men, in penetrating the motives of their conduct, in clearing up obscure circumstances, in detecting the strong and the weak parts of him whom he was trying, and in the cross-examination of the numerous witnesses he summoned, he assumed at once the judge and the advocate! Books for him were pictures of men's inventions, and the histories of their thoughts; for any book, whatever be its quality, must be considered as an experiment of the human mind.

In controversies, in which he was so ambi-dexterous—in the progress of the human mind, in which he was so philosophical—furnished, too, by his hoarding curiosity with an immense accumulation of details,—skilful in the art of detecting falsehoods amidst truths, and weighing probability against uncertainty—holding together the chain of argument from its first principles, to its re-

motest consequence—Bayle stands among those masters of the human intellect who taught us to think, and also to unthink! All, indeed, is a collection of researches and of reasonings: he had the art of melting down his curious quotations with his own subtile ideas. He collects every thing: if truths, they enter into history; if fictions, into discussions: he places the secret by the side of the public story; opinion is balanced against opinion: if his arguments grow tedious, a lucky anecdote or an enlivening tale relieve the folio page; and, knowing the infirmity of our nature, he picks up trivial things to amuse us, while he is grasping the most abstract and ponderous. Human nature in her shifting scenery, and the human mind in its eccentric directions, open on his view; so that an unknown person, or a worthless book, are equally objects for his speculation with the most eminent—they alike curiously instruct. Such were the materials, and such the genius of the man, whose folios which seemed destined for the retired few, lie open on parlour tables. The men of genius of his age studied them for instruction, the men of the world for their amusement. Amidst the mass of facts which he has

collected, and the enlarged views of human nature which his philosophical spirit has combined with his researches, BAYLE may be called the Shakspeare of dictionary makers; a sort of chimerical being, whose existence was not imagined to be possible before the time of BAYLE.

But his errors are voluminous as his genius! and what do apologies avail? They only account for the evil which they cannot alter!

BAYLE is reproached for carrying his speculations too far into the wilds of scepticism—he wrote in distempered time; he was witnessing the *dragonades* and the *revocations* of the Romish church; and he lived amidst the Reformed, or the French prophets, as we called them when they came over to us, and in whom Sir Isaac Newton more than half believed; these testified that they had heard angels singing in the air, while our philosopher was convinced that he was living among men for whom no angel would sing! BAYLE had left persecutors to fly to fanatics, both equally appealing to the Gospel, but alike untouched by its blessedness! His impurities were a taste inherited from his favourite old writers, whose *naïveté* seemed to sport with the grossness which it

touched, and neither in France, nor at home, had the age then attained to our moral delicacy: BAYLE himself was a man without passions! His trivial matters were an author's compliance with the bookseller's taste, which is always that of the public. His scepticism is said to have thrown every thing into disorder. Is it a more positive evil to doubt, than to dogmatise? Even Aristotle often pauses with a qualifying *perhaps*, and the egotist Cicero with a modest *it seems to me*. His scepticism has been useful in history, and has often shown how facts universally believed are doubtful, and sometimes must be false. BAYLE, it is said, is perpetually contradicting himself; but a sceptic must doubt his doubts; he places the antidote close to the poison, and lays the sheath by the sword. BAYLE has himself described one of those self-tormenting and many-headed sceptics by a very noble figure, "He was a Hydra who was perpetually tearing himself."

The time has now come when BAYLE may instruct without danger. We have passed the ordeals he had to go through; we must now consider him as the historian of our thoughts as well as of our actions; he dispenses the literary

stores of the moderns, in that vast repository of their wisdom and their follies, which, by its originality of design, has made him an author common to all Europe. Nowhere shall we find a rival for BAYLE! and hardly even an imitator! He compared himself, for his power of raising up, or dispelling objections and doubts, to "the cloud-compelling Jove." The great Leibnitz, who was himself a lover of his *varia eruditio*, applied a line of Virgil to BAYLE, characterizing his luminous and elevated genius:

> "Sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis."
> Beneath his feet he views the clouds and stars!

CHARACTERISTICS OF BAYLE.

To know BAYLE as a man, we must not study him in the folio Life of Des Maiseaux; whose laborious pencil, without colour, and without expression, loses in its indistinctness the individualising strokes of the portrait. Look for BAYLE in his "Letters," those true chronicles of a literary man, when they solely record his own pursuits.

The personal character of BAYLE was unblemished even by calumny—his executor, Basnage, never could mention him without tears! With simplicity which approached to an infantine nature, but with the fortitude of a Stoic, our literary philosopher, from his earliest days, dedicated himself to literature; the great sacrifice consisted of those two main objects of human pursuits—fortune and a family. Many an ascetic, who has headed an order, has not so religiously abstained from all worldly interests; yet let us not imagine that there was a sullenness in his stoicism; an icy misanthropy which shuts up the heart from its ebb and flow. His domestic

affections through life were fervid. When his mother desired to receive his portrait, he sent her a picture of his heart! Early in life the mind of Bayle was strengthening itself by a philosophical resignation to all human events!

"I am indeed of a disposition neither to fear bad fortune, nor to have very ardent desires for good. Yet I lose this steadiness and indifference when I reflect, that your love to me makes you feel for every thing that happens to me. It is, therefore, from the consideration that my misfortunes would be a torment to you, that I wish to be happy; and when I think that my happiness would be all your joy, I should lament that my bad fortune should continue to persecute me; though, as to my own particular interest, I dare promise to myself that I shall never be very much affected by it."

An instance occurred of those social affections in which a stoic is sometimes supposed to be deficient, which might have afforded a beautiful illustration to one of our most elegant poets. The remembrance of the happy moments which Bayle spent when young on the borders of the river Auriege, a short distance from his native

town of Carlat, where he had been sent to recover from a fever, occasioned by an excessive indulgence in reading, induced him many years afterwards to devote an article to it in his "Critical Dictionary," for the sake of quoting the poet who had celebrated this obscure river; it was a "Pleasure of Memory!" a tender association of domestic feeling!

The first step which Bayle took in life is remarkable. He changed his religion and became a Catholic; a year afterwards he returned to the creed of his fathers. Posterity might not have known the story had it not been recorded in his Diary. The circumstance is thus curiously stated.

BAYLE'S DIARY.

Years of the Christian Æra.		Years of my age.	
1669,	Tuesday, March 19.	22.	I changed my religion—next day I resumed the study of logic.
1670.	August 20.	23.	I returned to the reformed religion, and made a private abjuration of the Romish religion in the hands of four ministers!

His brother was one of these ministers; while a Catholic, BAYLE had attempted to convert him by a letter, long enough to evince his sincerity, but without his subscription, we should not have ascribed it to BAYLE.

For this vascillation in his religion has BAYLE endured bitter censure. Gibbon, who himself changed his, about the same "year of his age," and for as short a period, sarcastically observes of the first entry, that "BAYLE should have finished his logic before he changed his religion." It may be retorted, that when he had learnt to reason, he renounced Catholicism! The true fact is, that when BAYLE had only studied a few months at college, some books of controversial divinity by the Catholics, offered many a specious argument against the Reformed doctrines; a young student was easily entangled in the nets of the Jesuits. But their passive obedience, and their transubstantiation, and other stuff woven in their looms, soon enabled such a man as BAYLE to recover his senses. The promises and the caresses of the wily Jesuits were rejected, and the gush of tears of the brothers, on his return to the

religion of his fathers, is one of the most pathetic incidents of domestic life.

Bayle was willing to become an expatriated man; to study from the love of study, in poverty and honour! It happens sometimes that great men are criminated for their noblest deeds by both parties.

When his great work appeared, the adversaries of Bayle reproached him with haste, while the author expressed his astonishment at his slowness. At first "the Critical Dictionary," consisting only of two folios, was finished in little more than four years; but in the life of Bayle this was equivalent to a treble amount with men of ordinary application. Bayle even calculated the time of his head-aches; "My megrims would have left me had it been in my power to have lived without study; by them I lose many days in every month"—the fact is, that Bayle had entirely given up every sort of recreation except that delicious inebriation of his faculties, as we may term it for those who know what it is, which he drew from his books: we have his avowal. "Public amusements, games, country jaunts, morning visits, and other recrea-

tions necessary to many students, as they tell us, were none of my business. I wasted no time on them, nor in any domestic cares; never soliciting for preferment, nor busied in any other way. I have been happily delivered from many occupations which were not suitable to my humour; and I have enjoyed the greatest and the most charming leisure that a man of letters could desire. By such means an author makes a great progress in a few years."

Bayle, at Rotterdam, was appointed to a professorship of philosophy and history; the salary was a competence to his frugal life, and enabled him to publish his celebrated Review, which he dedicates "to the glory of the city," for *illa nobis hæc otia fecit.*

After this grateful acknowledgment he was unexpectedly deprived of the professorship. The secret history is curious. After a tedious war, some one amused the world by a chimerical "Project of Peace," which was much against the wishes and the designs of our William III. Jurieu, the head of the Reformed party in Holland, a man of heated fancies, persuaded William's party that this book was a part of a secret cabal

in Europe, raised by Louis XIV. against William III.; and accused BAYLE as the author and promoter of this political confederacy. The magistrates, who were the creatures of William, dismissed BAYLE without alleging any reason. To an ordinary philosopher it would have seemed hard to lose his salary because his antagonist was one

"Whose sword is sharper than his pen."

BAYLE only rejoiced at this emancipation, and quietly returned to his Dictionary. His feelings on this occasion he has himself perpetuated.

"The sweetness and repose I find in the studies in which I have engaged myself, and which are my delight, will induce me to remain in this city, if I am allowed to continue in it, at least till the printing of my Dictionary is finished; for my presence is absolutely necessary in the place where it is printed. I am no lover of money, nor of honours, and would not accept of any invitation, should it be made to me; nor am I fond of the disputes and cabals, and professorial snarlings, which reign in all our academies: *Canam mihi et Musis.*" He was indeed so charmed by quiet

and independence, that he was continually refusing the most magnificent offers of patronage: from Count Guiscard, the French ambassador; but particularly from our English nobility. The Earls of Shaftesbury, of Albemarle, and of Huntingdon, tried every solicitation to win him over to reside with them as their friend; and too nice a sense of honour induced BAYLE to refuse the Duke of Shrewsbury's gift of two hundred guineas for the dedication of his Dictionary. "I have so often ridiculed dedications that I must not risk any," was the reply of our philosopher.

The only complaint which escaped from BAYLE was the want of books; an evil particularly felt during his writing the "Critical Dictionary;" a work which should have been composed not distant from the shelves of a public library. Men of classical attainments, who are studying about twenty authors, and chiefly for their style, can form no conception of the state of famine to which an "helluo librorum" is too often reduced in the new sort of study which BAYLE founded. Taste when once obtained may be said to be no acquiring faculty, and must remain stationary; but Knowledge is of perpetual growth, and has

infinite demands. Taste, like an artificial canal, winds through a beautiful country; but its borders are confined, and its term is limited: Knowledge navigates the ocean, and is perpetually on voyages of discovery. BAYLE often grieves over the scarcity, or the want of books, by which he was compelled to leave many things uncertain, or to take them at second-hand; but he lived to discover that trusting to the reports of others, was too often suffering the blind to lead the blind. It was this circumstance which induced BAYLE to declare, that some works cannot be written in the country, and that the metropolis only can supply the wants of the literary man. Plutarch has made a similar confession; and the elder Pliny who had not so many volumes to turn over as a modern, was sensible to the want of books, for he acknowledges that there was no book so bad by which we might not profit.

BAYLE's peculiar vein of research and skill in discussion first appeared in his "Pensées sur la Comete." In December, 1680, a comet had appeared, and the public yet trembled at a portentous meteor, which they still imagined was connected with some forthcoming and terrible

event! Persons as curious as they were terrified teased BAYLE by their inquiries, but resisted all his arguments. They found many things more than arguments in his amusing volumes: "I am not one of the authors by profession," says BAYLE, in giving an account of the method he meant to pursue, "who follow a series of views; who first project their subject, then divide it into books and chapters, and who only choose to work on the ideas they have planned. I, for my part, give up all claims to authorship, and shall chain myself to no such servitude. I cannot meditate with much regularity on one subject; I am too fond of change. I often wander from the subject, and jump into places of which it might be difficult to guess the way out; so that I shall make a learned doctor who looks for method quite impatient with me." The work is indeed full of curiosities and anecdotes, with many critical ones concerning history. At first it found an easy entrance into France, as a simple account of comets; but when it was discovered that BAYLE's comet had a number of fiery tails concerning the French and the Austrians, it soon became as terrific as the comet itself, and was prohibited!

Bayle's "Critique generale de l'histoire du Calvinisme par le Pere Maimbourg," had more pleasantry than bitterness, except to the palate of the vindictive Father, who was of too hot a constitution to relish the delicacy of our author's wit. Maimbourg stirred up all the intrigues he could rouse to get the Critique burnt by the hangman at Paris. The lieutenant of the police, De la Reynie, who was among the many who did not dislike to see the Father corrected by Bayle, delayed this execution from time to time, till there came a final order. This lieutenant of the police was a shrewd fellow, and wishing to put an odium on the bigoted Maimbourg, allowed the irascible Father to write the proclamation himself with all the violence of an enraged author. It is a curious specimen of one who evidently wished to burn his brother with his book. In this curious proclamation, which has been preserved as a literary curiosity, Bayle's "Critique" is declared to be defamatory and calumnious, abounding with seditious forgeries, pernicious to all good subjects, and therefore is condemned to be torn to pieces, and burnt at the *Place de Greve*. All printers and booksellers are forbidden to print, or to sell,

or disperse the said abominable book, under *pain of death;* and all other persons, of what quality or condition soever, are to undergo the penalty of exemplary punishment. De la Reynie must have smiled on submissively receiving this effusion from our enraged author; and to punish Maimbourg in the only way he could contrive, and to do at the same time the greatest kindness to Bayle, whom he admired, he dispersed three thousand copies of this proclamation to be posted up through Paris: the alarm and the curiosity were simultaneous; but the latter prevailed. Every book collector hastened to procure a copy so terrifically denounced, and at the same time so amusing. The author of the "Livres condamné au feu" might have inserted this anecdote in his collection. It may be worth adding, that Maimbourg always affected to say that he had never read Bayle's work, but he afterwards confessed to Menage, that he could not help valuing a book of such curiosity. Jurieu was so jealous of its success, that Beauval attributes his personal hatred of Bayle to our young philosopher overshadowing that veteran.

The taste for literary history we owe to Bayle;

and the great interest he communicated to these researches spread in the national tastes of Europe. France has been always the richest in these stores, but our acquisitions have been rapid; and Johnson, who delighted in them, elevated their means and their end, by the ethical philosophy and the spirit of criticism which he awoke. With Bayle, indeed, his minor works were the seed-plots; but his great Dictionary opened the forest.

It is curious, however, to detect the difficulties of early attempts, and the indifferent success which sometimes attends them in their first state. Bayle, to lighten the fatigue of correcting the second edition of his Dictionary, wrote the first volume of "Réponses aux Questions d'un Provincial," a supposititious correspondence with a country gentleman. It was a work of mere literary curiosity, and of a better description of miscellaneous writing than that of the prevalent fashion of giving thoughts and maxims, and fanciful characters, and idle stories, which had satiated the public taste: however the book was not well received. He attributes the public caprice to his prodigality of literary anecdotes,

and other *minutiæ literariæ*, and his frequent quotations! but he defends himself with skill. "It is against the nature of things to pretend that in a work to prove and clear up facts, an author should only make use of his own thoughts, or that he ought to quote very seldom. Those who say, that the work does not sufficiently interest the public, are doubtless in the right; but an author cannot interest the public except he discusses moral or political subjects. All others with which men of letters fill their books are useless to the public; and we ought to consider them as only a kind of frothy nourishment in themselves; but which, however, gratify the curiosity of many readers, according to the diversity of their tastes. What is there, for example, less interesting to the public than the *Bibliothèque Choisie* of Colomiés, (a small bibliographical work); yet is that work looked on as excellent in its kind. I could mention other works which are read, though containing nothing which interests the public." Two years after, when he resumed these letters, he changed his plan; he became more argumentative, and more sparing of literary and historical articles. We have now certainly obtained more

decided notions of the nature of this species of composition, and treat such investigations with more skill; still they are "caviare to the multitude." An accumulation of dry facts, without any exertion of taste or discussion, forms but the barren and obscure diligence of title-hunters. All things which come to the reader without having first passed through the mind, as well as the pen of the writer, will be still open to the fatal objection of insane industry raging with a depraved appetite for trash and cinders; and this is the line of demarcation which will for ever separate a Bayle from a Prosper Marchand, and a Warton from a Ritson: the one must be satisfied to be useful, but the other will not fail to delight. Yet something must be alleged in favour of those who may sometimes indulge researches too minutely; perhaps there is a point beyond which nothing remains but useless curiosity; yet this too may be relative. The pleasure of these pursuits is only tasted by those who are accustomed to them, and whose employments are thus converted into amusements. A man of fine genius, Addison relates, trained up in all the polite studies of antiquity, upon being obliged to search

into several rolls and records, at first found this a very dry and irksome employment; yet he assured me, that at last he took an incredible pleasure in it, and preferred it even to the reading of Virgil and Cicero.

As for our BAYLE, he exhibits a perfect model of the real literary character. He, with the secret alchymy of human happiness, extracted his tranquillity out of the baser metals, at the cost of his ambition and his fortune. Throughout a voluminous work, he experienced the enjoyment of perpetual acquisition and delight; he obtained glory, and he endured persecution. He died as he had lived, in the same uninterrupted habits of composition; for with his dying hand, and nearly speechless, he sent a fresh proof to the printer!

CICERO VIEWED AS A COLLECTOR.

Mr. Fuseli, in the introduction to the second part of his Lectures, has touched on the character of Cicero, respecting his knowledge and feeling of Art, in a manner which excites our curiosity. "Though," says that eloquent lecturer, "Cicero seems to have had as little *native taste* for painting and sculpture, and even less than he had taste for poetry, he had a conception of Nature, and with his usual acumen frequently scattered useful hints and pertinent observations. For many of these he might probably be indebted to Hortensius, with whom, though his rival in eloquence, he lived on terms of familiarity, and who was a man of declared taste, and one of the first collectors of the time." The inquiry may amuse, to trace the progress of *Cicero's taste for the works of art;* which was probably a late, but an ardent pursuit with this celebrated man; and their actual enjoyment seems with him rather to have been connected with some future plan of life.

CICERO, when about forty-three years of age, seems to have projected the formation of a library and a collection of antiquities, with the remote intention of secession, and one day stealing away from the noisy honours of the republic. Although that great man remained too long a victim to his political ambition, yet at all times his natural dispositions would break out, and amidst his public avocations he often anticipated a time when life would be unvalued without uninterrupted repose; but repose, destitute of the ample furniture, and even of the luxuries of a mind occupying itself in literature and art, would only for him have opened the repose of a desert! It was rather his provident wisdom than their actual enjoyment, which induced him, at a busied period of his life, to accumulate from all parts, books, and statues, and curiosities, without number; in a word, to become, according to the term, too often misapplied and misconceived among us, for it is not always understood in an honourable sense, a COLLECTOR!

Like other later COLLECTORS, Cicero often appears ardent to possess what he was not able to command; sometimes he entreats, or circuitously

negotiates, or is planning the future means to secure the acquisitions which he thirsted after. He is repeatedly soliciting his literary friend Atticus to keep his books for him, and not to dispose of his collections on any terms, however earnestly the bidders may crowd; and, to keep his patience in good hope (for Atticus imagined his collection would exceed the price which Cicero could afford,) he desires Atticus not to despair of his being able to make them his, for that he was saving all his rents to purchase these books for the relief of his old age.

This projected library, and collection of antiquities, it was the intention of Cicero to have placed in his favourite villa in the neighbourhood of Rome, whose name, consecrated by time, now proverbially describes the retirement of a man of elegant tastes. To adorn his villa at Tusculum formed the day-dreams of this man of genius; and his passion broke out in all the enthusiasm and impatience which so frequently characterize the modern collector. Not only Atticus, on whose fine taste he could depend, but every one likely to increase his acquisitions, was Cicero persecuting with entreaties on entreaties, with the

seduction of large prices, and with the expectation, that if the orator and consul would submit to accept any bribe, it would hardly be refused in the shape of a manuscript or a statue. "In the name of our friendship," says Cicero, addressing Atticus, "suffer nothing to escape you of whatever you find curious or rare." When Atticus informed him that he should send him a fine statue, in which the heads of Mercury and Minerva were united together, Cicero, with the enthusiasm of a maniacal lover of the present day, finds every object which is uncommon the very thing for which he has a proper place. "Your discovery is admirable, and the statue you mention seems to have been made purposely for my cabinet." Then follows an explanation of the mystery of this allegorical statue, which expressed the happy union of exercise and study. "Continue," he adds, "to collect for me, as you have promised, *in as great a quantity as possible*, morsels of this kind." Cicero, like other collectors, may be suspected not to have been very difficult in his choice, and for him the curious was not less valued than the beautiful. The mind and temper of Cicero were of a robust and philosophical cast,

not too subject to the tortures of those whose morbid imagination and delicacy of taste touch on infirmity. It is, however, amusing to observe this great man, actuated by all the fervour and joy of collecting. "I have paid your agent, as you ordered, for the Megaric statues—send me as *many* of them as you can, *and as soon as possible*, with any others which you think proper for the place, and to my taste, and good enough to please yours. You cannot imagine how greatly my *passion increases* for this sort of things; it is such that it may appear *ridiculous* in the eyes of many; but you are my friend, and will only think of satisfying my wishes." Again—"Purchase for me, without thinking further, all that you discover of rarity. My friend, do not spare my purse." And, indeed, in another place he loves Atticus both for his promptitude and cheap purchases: *Te multum amamus, quod ea abs te diligenter, parvoque curata sunt.*

Our collectors may not be displeased to discover at their head so venerable a personage as Cicero; nor to sanction their own feverish thirst and panting impatience with all the raptures on the day of possession, and the "saving of rents"

to afford commanding prices—by the authority of the greatest philosopher of antiquity.

A fact is noticed in this article which requires elucidation. In the life of a true collector, the selling of his books is a singular incident. The truth is, that the elegant friend of Cicero, residing in the literary city of Athens, appears to have enjoyed but a moderate income, and may be said to have traded not only in books, but in gladiators, whom he let out, and also charged interest for the use of his money; circumstances which Cornelius Nepos, who gives an account of his landed property, has omitted, as, perhaps, not well adapted to heighten the interesting picture which he gives of Atticus, but which the Abbé Mongault has detected in his curious notes on Cicero's letters to Atticus. It is certain that he employed his slaves, who, "to the foot-boy," as Middleton expresses himself, were all literary and skilful scribes, in copying the works of the best authors for his own use; but the duplicates were sold, to the common profit of the master and the slave. The state of literature among the ancients may be paralleled with that of the age of our first restorers of learning, when printing was

not yet established; then Boccaccio, and Petrach, and such men, were collectors, and zealously occupied in the manual labour of transcription; immeasurable was the delight of that avariciousness of manuscript, by which, in a certain given time, the possessor, with an unwearied pen, could enrich himself by his copy; and this copy an estate would not always purchase! Besides that a manuscript selected by Atticus, or copied by the hand of Boccaccio and Petrarch, must have risen in value, associating it with the known taste and judgment of the COLLECTOR.

THE HISTORY OF THE CARACCIS.

The congenial histories of literature and of art are accompanied by the same periodical revolutions; and none is more interesting than that one which occurs in the decline and corruption of arts, when a single mind returning to right principles, amidst the degenerated race who had forsaken them, seems to create a new epoch, and teaches a servile race once more how to invent! These epochs are few, but are easily distinguished. The human mind is never stationary; it advances or it retrogrades; having reached its meridian point, when the hour of perfection has gone by, it must verge to its decline. In all Art, perfection lapses into that weakened state too often dignified as classical imitation; but it sinks into mannerism, and wantons into affectation, till it shoots out into fantastic novelties. When all languishes in a state of mediocrity, or is deformed by false tastes, then is reserved for a fortunate genius the glory of restoring another golden age of invention. The history of the

Caracci family serves as an admirable illustration of such an epoch, while the personal characters of the three Caraccis throw an additional interest over this curious incident in the history of the works of genius.

The establishment of the famous *accademia*, or school of painting, at Bologna, which restored the art in the last stage of degeneracy, originated in the profound meditations of Lodovico. There was a happy boldness in the idea; but its great singularity was that of discovering those men of genius, who alone could realize his ideal conception, amidst his own family circle; and yet these were men whose opposite dispositions and acquirements could hardly have given any hope of mutual assistance; and much less of melting together their minds and their work in such an unity of conception and execution, that even to our days they leave the critics undetermined which of the Caraccis to prefer; each excelling the other in some pictorial quality. Often combining together in the same picture, the mingled labour of three painters seemed to proceed from one pallet, as their works exhibit which adorn the churches of Bologna. They still dispute about

a picture, to ascertain which of the Caraccis painted it; and still one prefers Lodovico for his *grandiosità*, another Agostino for his invention, and others Annibale for his vigour or his grace*.

What has been told of others, happened to Lodovico Caracci in his youth; he struggled with a mind tardy in its conceptions, so that he gave no indications of talent; and was apparently so inept as to have been advised by two masters to be satisfied to grind the colours he ought not otherwise to meddle with. Tintoretto, from friendship, exhorted him to change his trade. "This sluggishness of intellect did not proceed," observes the sagacious Lanzi, "from any deficiency, but from the depth of his penetrating mind: early in life he dreaded the ideal as a rock on which so many of his contemporaries had been shipwrecked." His hand was not blest with precocious facility, because his mind was unsettled about truth itself; he was still seeking for nature, which he could not discover in those wretched mannerists, who, boasting of their freedom and expedition in their bewildering tastes, which

* Lanzi, Storia Pittorica, V. 85.

they called the ideal, relied on the diplomas and honours obtained by intrigue or purchase, which sanctioned their follies in the eyes of the multitude. "Lodovico," says Lanzi, "would first satisfy his own mind on every line; he would not paint till painting well became a habit, and till habit produced facility."

Lodovico then sought in other cities for what he could not find at Bologna. He travelled to inspect the works of the elder masters; he meditated on all their details; he penetrated to the very thoughts of the great artists, and grew intimate with their modes of conception and execution. The true principles of art were collected together in his own mind,—the rich fruits of his own studies,—and these first prompted him to invent a new school of painting*.

Returning to Bologna, he found his degraded brothers in art still quarrelling about the merits of the old and the new school, and still exulting in their vague conceptions and expeditious methods. Lodovico, who had observed all, had summed up his principles in one grand maxim,—

* D'Argenville, Vies des Peintres, II. 46.

that of combining a close observation of nature with the imitation of the great masters, modifying both, however, by the disposition of the artist himself. Such was the simple idea and the happy project of Lodovico! Every perfection seemed to have been obtained: the *Raffaeleschi* excelled in the ideal; the *Michelangioleschi* in the anatomical; the Venetian and the Lombard schools in brilliant vivacity or philosophic gravity. All seemed pre-occupied; but the secret of breaking the bonds of servile imitation was a new art: of mingling into one school the charms of every school, adapting them with freedom; and having been taught by all, to remain a model for all; or, as Lanzi expresses it, *dopo avere appresso da tutte insegnò a tutte.* To restore Art in its decline, Lodovico pressed all the sweets from all the flowers; or, melting together all his rich materials, formed one Corinthian brass. This school is described by Du Fresnoy in the character of Annibale,

——————— Quos sedulus Hannibal omnes
In PROPRIAM MENTEM atque morem mirâ arte COEGIT.

Paraphrased by Mason,

From all their charms combined, with happy toil,
Did Annibal compose his wondrous style;
O'er the fair fraud so close a veil is thrown,
That every borrow'd grace becomes his own*.

Lodovico perceived that he could not stand alone in the breach, and single-handed encounter

* The curious reader of taste may refer to Mr. Fuseli's Second Lecture for a *diatribe* against what he calls "the Eclectic School; which, by selecting the beauties, correcting the faults, supplying the defects, and avoiding the extremes of the different styles, attempted to form a perfect system." He acknowledges the greatness of the Caraccis; yet he laughs at the mere copying the manners of various painters into one picture. But perhaps, I say it with all possible deference, our animated critic forgot for a moment that it was no mechanical imitation the Caraccis inculcated: *nature* and *art* were to be equally studied, and *secondo il natio talento e la propria sua disposizione*. Barry distinguishes with praise and warmth. "Whether," says he, "we may content ourselves with adopting the *manly plan of art* pursued by the Caraccis and their school at Bologna, in uniting the perfections of all the other schools; or whether, which I rather hope, we look further into the style of design upon our own studies after nature; whichever of these plans the nation might fix on," *&c.*, II. 518. Thus three great names, Du Fresnoy, Fuseli, and Barry, restricted their notions of the Caracci plan to a mere imitation of the great masters; but Lanzi, in unfolding Lodovico's project, lays down as his first principle the observation of nature, and, secondly, the imitation of the great masters; and all modified by the natural disposition of the artist.

an impetuous multitude. He thought of raising up a party among those youthful aspirants who had not yet been habitually depraved. He had a brother whose talent could never rise beyond a poor copyist's, and him he had the judgment, unswayed by undue partiality, to account as a cipher; but he found two of his cousins, men capable of becoming as extraordinary as himself.

These brothers, Agostino and Annibale, first by nature, and then by their manners and habits, were of the most opposite dispositions. Born amidst humble occupations, their father was a tailor, and Annibale was still working on the paternal board, while Agostino was occupied by the elegant works of the goldsmith, whence he acquired the fine art of engraving, in which he became the Marc Antonio of his time. Their manners, perhaps, resulted from their trades. Agostino was a man of science and literature: a philosopher and poet, of the most polished elegance, the most enchanting conversation, far removed from the vulgar, he became the companion of the learned and the noble. Annibale could scarcely write and read; an inborn ruggedness made him sullen, taciturn, or if he spoke, sar-

castic; scorn and ridicule were his bitter delight. Nature had strangely made these brothers little less than enemies. Annibale despised his brother for having entered into the higher circles; he ridiculed his refined manners, and even the neat elegance of his dress. To mortify Agostino, one day, he sent him a portrait of their father threading a needle, and their mother cutting out the cloth, to remind him, as he once whispered in Agostino's ear, when he met him walking with a nobleman, "not to forget that they were sons of a poor tailor!" The same contrast existed in the habits of their mind. Agostino was slow to resolve, difficult to satisfy himself; he was for polishing and maturing every thing: Annibale was too rapid to suffer any delay, and often evading the difficulties of the art, loved to do much in a short time. Lodovico soon perceived their equal and natural aptitude for art; and placing Agostino under a master, who was celebrated for his facility of execution, he fixed Annibale in his own study, where his cousin might be taught by observation the *Festina lente;* how the best works are formed by a leisurely haste. Lodovico seems to have adopted the artifice of Isocrates in his management of two

pupils, of whom he said, that the one was to be pricked on by the spur, and the other kept in by the rein.

But a new difficulty arose in the attempt to combine together such incongruous natures; the thoughtful Lodovico, intent on the great project of the reformation of the art, by his prudence long balanced their unequal tempers, and with that penetration which so strongly characterizes his genius, directed their distinct talents to his one great purpose. From the literary Agostino he obtained the philosophy of critical lectures and scientific principles; invention and designing solely occupied Annibale; while the softness of contours, lightness and grace, were his own acquisition*. But though Annibale presumptuously contemned the rare and elevated talents of Agostino, and scarcely submitted to copy the works of Lodovico, whom he preferred to rival, yet, according to a traditional rumour which Lanzi records, it was Annibale's decision of character which enabled him, as it were, unperceived, to become the master over his cousin and his brother; Lo-

* D'Argenville, Vies des Peintres, II. 47—68.

dovico and Agostino long hesitated to oppose the predominant style, in their first Essays; Annibale hardily decided to persevere in opening their new career by opposing "works to voices;" and to the enervate labours of their wretched rivals, their own works, warm in vigour and freshness, conducted on the principles of nature and art.

The Caraccis not only resolved to paint justly, but to preserve the art itself, by perpetuating the perfect taste of the true style among their successors. In their own house they opened an *Accademia*, calling it *degli Incamminati*, "the opening a new way," or "the beginners." The academy was furnished with casts, drawings, prints, a school for anatomy, and for the living figure; receiving all comers with kindness; teaching gratuitously, and, as it is said, without jealousy; but too many facts are recorded to assent to the banishment of this infectious passion from the academy of the Caraccis, who, like other congregated artists, could not live together and escape their own endemial fever.

It was here, however, that Agostino found his eminence as the director of their studies; delivering lectures on architecture and perspective, and

pointing out from his stores of history and fable subjects for the designs of their pupils, who, on certain days, exhibited their works to the most skilful judges, adjusting the merits by their decisions. "To the crowned sufficient is the prize of glory," says Lanzi; and while the poets chanted their praises, the lyre of Agostino himself gratefully celebrated the progress of his pupils. A curious sonnet has been transmitted to us, where Agostino, like the ancient legislators, compresses his new laws into a few verses, easily to be remembered. The sonnet is now well known, since Mr. Fuseli and Barry have preserved it in their lectures. This singular production has, however, had the hard fate of being unjustly depreciated: Lanzi calls it *pittoresco veramente più che poetico;* Mr. Fuseli sarcastically compares it to "a medical prescription." It delighted Barry, who calls it "a beautiful poem." Considered as a didactic and descriptive poem, no lover of art, who has ever read it, will cease to repeat it till he has got it by heart. In this academy every one was free to indulge his own taste, provided he did not violate the essential principles of art; for, though the critics have usually described the character of this

new school to have been an imitation of the preceding ones, it was their first principle to be guided by nature, and their own dispositions ; and if their painter was deficient in originality, it was not the fault of this academy, so much as of the academician. In difficult doubts they had recourse to Lodovico, whom Lanzi describes in his school like Homer among the Greeks, *fons ingeniorum* profound in every part of painting. Even the recreations of the pupils were contrived to keep their mind and hand in exercise; in their walks sketching landscapes from nature, or amusing themselves with what the Italians call *Caricatura*, a term of large signification; for it includes many sorts of grotesque inventions, whimsical incongruities, such as those arabesques found at Herculaneum, where Anchises, Æneas, and Ascanius, are burlesqued by heads of apes and pigs, or Arion, with a grotesque motion, is straddling a great trout; or like that ludicrous parody which came from the hand of Titian, in a playful hour, when he sketched the Laocoon whose three figures consist of apes. Annibale had a peculiar facility in these incongruous inventions, and even

the severe Leonardo da Vinci considered them as useful exercises.

Such was the academy founded by the Caracci; and Lodovico lived to realize his project in the reformation of art, and witnessed the school of Bologna flourishing afresh when all the others had fallen. The great masters of this last epoch of Italian painting were their pupils. Such were Domenichino, who, according to the expression of Bellori, *delinea gli animi, colorisce la vita;* he drew the soul and coloured life*. Albano, whose grace distinguishes him as the Anacreon of painting; Guido, whose touch was all beauty and delicacy, and, as Passeri delightfully expresses it, "whose faces came from Paradise†;" a scholar of whom his masters became jealous, while Annibale, to depress Guido, patronised Domenichino and even the wise Lodovico could not dissimulate the fear of a new competitor in a pupil, and to mortify Guido, preferred Guercino, who trod in another path. Lanfranco closes this glorious list, whose freedom and grandeur for their

* Bellori, Le Vite de Pittori, &c.

† Passeri, Vite de Pittori.

full display required the ample field of some vast history.

The secret history of this *Accademia* forms an illustration for that chapter on "Literary Jealousy" which I have written in "The Literary Character." We have seen even the gentle Lodovico infected by it; but it raged in the breast of Annibale. Careless of fortune as they were through life, and freed from the bonds of matrimony, that they might wholly devote themselves to all the enthusiasm of their art, they lived together in the perpetual intercourse of their thoughts; and even at their meals laid on their table their crayons and their papers, so that any motion or gesture which occurred, as worthy of picturing, was instantly sketched. Annibale caught something of the critical taste of Agostino, learnt to work more slowly, and to finish with more perfection, while his inventions were enriched by the elevated thoughts and erudition of Agostino. Yet a circumstance which happened in the academy betrays the mordacity and envy of Annibale at the superior accomplishments of his more learned brother. While Agostino was describing with great eloquence the beauties of

the Laocoon, Annibale approached the wall, and snatching up his crayons, drew the marvellous figure with such perfection, that the spectators gazed on it in astonishment. Alluding to his brother's lecture, the proud artist disdainfully observed, "Poets paint with words, but painters only with their pencils*."

The brothers could neither live together nor endure absence. Many years their life was one continued struggle and mortification; and Agostino often sacrificed his genius to pacify the jealousy of Annibale, by relinquishing his pallet to resume those exquisite engravings, in which he corrected the faulty outlines of the masters whom he copied, so that his engravings are more perfect than their originals. To this unhappy circumstance, observes Lanzi, we must attribute the loss of so many noble compositions which otherwise Agostino, equal in genius to the other Caraccis, had left us. The jealousy of Annibale, at length, for ever tore them asunder. Lodovico happened not to be with them when they were engaged in painting together the Farnesian

* D' Argenville, II. 26.

gallery at Rome. A rumour spread that in their present combined labour the engraver had excelled the painter. This Annibale could not forgive; he raved at the bite of the serpent: words could not mollify, nor kindness any longer appease that perturbed spirit; neither the humiliating forbearance of Agostino, the counsels of the wise, nor the mediation of the great. They separated for ever! a separation in which they both languished, till Agostino, broken-hearted sunk into an early grave, and Annibale, now brotherless, lost half his genius; his great invention no longer accompanied him—for Agostino was not by his side*! After suffering many vexations, and preyed on by his evil temper, Annibale was deprived of his senses.

* Mr. Fuseli describes the gallery of the Farnese palace as a work of uniform vigour of execution, which nothing can equal but its *imbecility and incongruity of conception*. This deficiency in Annibale was always readily supplied by the taste and learning of Agostino; the vigour of Annibale was deficient both in sensibility and correct invention.

AN ENGLISH ACADEMY OF LITERATURE*.

We have Royal Societies for Philosophers, for Antiquaries, and for Artists—none for Men of Letters! The lovers of philological studies have regretted the want of an asylum since the days of Anne, when the establishment of an English Academy of Literature was designed; but political changes occurred which threw out a literary administration. France and Italy have gloried in great national academies, and even in provincial ones. With us the curious history and the fate of the societies at Spalding, Stamford, and Peterborough, whom their zealous founder lived to see sink into country clubs, is that of most of our *rural* attempts at literary academies! The Manchester Society has but an ambiguous existence, and that of Exeter expired in its birth. Yet that a great purpose may be obtained by an inconsiderable number, the history

* Long after this article was composed, *a Royal Academy of Literature* has been projected; with the state of its existence, I am unacquainted. It has occasioned no alteration in these researches.

of "the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures," *&c.* may prove; for that originally consisted only of twelve persons brought together with great difficulty, and neither distinguished for their ability nor their rank.

The opponents to the establishment of an academy in this country may urge, and find Bruyere on their side, that no corporate body generates a single man of genius; no Milton, no Hume, no Adam Smith will spring out of an academical community, however they may partake of one common labour. Of the fame, too, shared among the many, the individual feels his portion too contracted, besides that he will often suffer by comparison. Literature, with us, exists independent of patronage or association. We have done well without an academy; our dictionary and our style have been polished by individuals, and not by a society.

The advocates for such a literary institution may reply, that in what has been advanced against it, we may perhaps find more glory than profit. Had an academy been established in this country, we should have possessed all our present advantages with the peculiar ones of such an

institution. A series of volumes composed by the learned of England, had rivalled the precious "Memoirs of the French Academy;" probably more philosophical, and more congenial to our modes of thinking! The congregating spirit creates by its sympathy; an intercourse exists between its members, which had not otherwise occurred; in this attrition of minds the torpid awakens, the timid is emboldened, and the secluded is called forth; to contradict, and to be contradicted, is the privilege and the source of knowledge. Those original ideas, hints, and suggestions which some literary men sometimes throw out, once or twice during their whole lives, might here be preserved; and if endowed with sufficient funds, there are important labours, which surpass the means and industry of the individual, which would be more advantageously formed by such literary unions.

An academy of literature can only succeed by the means in which originated all such academies—among individuals themselves! It will not be "by the favour of the MANY, but by the wisdom and energy of the FEW." It is not even in the power of Royalty to create at a word what

can only be formed by the co-operation of the workmen themselves, and of the great taskmaster, Time!

Such institutions have sprung from the same principle, and have followed the same march. It was from a private meeting that "The French Academy" derived its origin; and the true beginners of that celebrated institution assuredly had no foresight of the object to which their conferences tended. Several literary friends at Paris, finding the extent of the city occasioned much loss of time in their visits, agreed to meet on a fixed day every week, and chose Conrart's residence as centrical. They met for the purposes of general conversation, or to walk together, or, what was not least social, to partake in some refreshing *collation*. All being literary men, those who were authors submitted their new works to this friendly society, who, without jealousy or malice, freely communicated their strictures; the works were improved, the authors were delighted, and the critics were honest! Such was the happy life of the members of this private society during three or four years. Pelisson, the earliest historian of the French

Academy, has delightfully described it: "It was such that now, when they speak of these first days of the academy, they call it the golden age, during which, with all the innocence and freedom of that fortunate period, without pomp and noise, and without any other laws than those of friendship, they enjoyed together all which a society of minds, and a rational life, can yield of whatever softens and charms."

They were happy, and they resolved to be silent; nor was this bond and compact of friendship violated till one of them, Malleville, secretary of Marshal Bassompierre, being anxious that his friend Faret, who had just printed his *L'Honnête Homme*, which he had drawn from the famous "Il Cortigiano" of Castiglione, should profit by all their opinions, procured his admission to one of their conferences; Faret presented them with his book, heard a great deal concerning the nature of his work, was charmed by their literary communications, and returned home ready to burst with the secret. Could the society hope that others would be more faithful than they had been to themselves? Faret happened to be one of those light-hearted men who are communi-

cative in the degree in which they are grateful, and he whispered the secret to Des Marets and to Boisrobert. The first, as soon as he heard of such a literary senate, used every effort to appear before them and read the first volume of his "Ariane;" Boisrobert, a man of distinction, and a common friend to them all, could not be refused an admission; he admired the frankness of their mutual criticisms. The society, besides, was a new object; and his daily business was to furnish an amusing story to his patron Richelieu. The cardinal-minister was very literary, and apt to be so hipped in his hours of retirement, that the physician declared, that "all his drugs were of no avail, unless his patient mixed with them a drachm of Boisrobert." In one of those fortunate moments, when the cardinal was "in the vein," Boisrobert painted, with the warmest hues, this region of literary felicity, of a small, happy society formed of critics and authors! The minister, who was ever considering things in that particular aspect which might tend to his own glory, instantly asked Boisrobert, whether this private meeting would not like to be constituted a public body, and establish itself by let-

ters patent, offering them his protection. The flatterer of the minister was overjoyed, and executed the important mission ; but not one of the members shared in the rapture, while some regretted an honour which would only disturb the sweetness and familiarity of their intercourse. Malleville, whose master was a prisoner in the Bastile, and Serisay, the *intendant* of the Duke of Rochefoucault, who was in disgrace at court, loudly protested, in the style of an opposition party, against the protection of the minister ; but Chapelain, who was known to have no party-interests, argued so clearly, that he left them to infer that Richelieu's *offer* was a *command ;* that the cardinal was a minister who willed not things by halves ; and was one of those very great men who avenge any contempt shewn to them, even on such little men as themselves ! In a word, the dogs bowed their necks to the golden collar. However, the appearance, if not the reality, of freedom was left to them ; and the minister allowed them to frame their own constitution, and elect their own magistrates and citizens in this infant and illustrious republic of literature. The history of the further establishment of the

French academy is elegantly narrated by Pelisson. The usual difficulty occurred of fixing on a title; and they appear to have changed it so often, that the academy was at first addressed by more than one title; Academie *des beaux Esprits;* Academie *de l'Eloquence;* Academie *Eminente,* in allusion to the quality of the cardinal, its protector. Desirous of avoiding the extravagant and mystifying titles of the Italian academies*, they fixed on the most unaffected, "*L'Academie Française;*" but though the national genius may disguise itself for a moment, it cannot be entirely got rid of, and they assumed a vaunting device of a laurel wreath, including their epigraph "*à l'Immortalité.*" The academy of Petersburgh has chosen a more enlightened inscription, *Paulatim* ("little by little,") so expressive of the great labours of man—even of the inventions of genius!

Such was the origin of L'Academie Francaise; it was long a private meeting before it became a public institution. Yet, like the Royal Society, its origin has been attributed to

* See an article "On the ridiculous titles assumed by the Italian Academies," in this volume.

political motives, with a view to divert the attention from popular discontents; but when we look into the real origin of the French Academy, and our Royal Society, it must be granted, that if the government either in France or England ever entertained this project, it came to them so accidentally that at least we cannot allow them the merit of profound invention. Statesmen are often considered by speculative men in their closets to be mightier wonder-workers than they often prove to be.

Were the origin of the Royal Society inquired into, it might be justly dated a century before its existence: the real founder was Lord Bacon, who planned the *ideal institution* in his philosophical romance of the New Atlantis! This notion is not fanciful, and it was that of its first founders, as not only appears by the expression of old Aubrey, when alluding to the commencement of the society, he adds, *secundum mentem Domini Baconi;* but by a rare print designed by Evelyn, probably for a frontispiece to Bishop Sprat's history, although we seldom find the print in the volume. The design is precious to a Grangerite, exhibiting three fine portraits. On one side is

represented a library, and on the table lie the statutes, the journals, and the mace of the Royal Society; on its opposite side are suspended numerous philosophical instruments; in the centre of the print is a column, on which is placed a bust of Charles II. the patron; on each side whole lengths of Lord Brouncker, the first president, and Lord Bacon, as the founder, inscribed *Artium Instaurator*. The graver of Hollar has preserved this happy intention of Evelyn's which exemplifies what may be called the continuity and genealogy of genius, as its spirit is perpetuated by its successors.

When the fury of the civil wars had exhausted all parties, and a breathing time from the passions and madness of the age allowed ingenious men to return once more to their forsaken studies, Bacon's vision of a philosophical society appears to have occupied their reveries. It charmed the fancy of Cowley and Milton; but the politics and religion of the times were still possessed by the same frenzy, and divinity and politics were unanimously agreed to be utterly proscribed from their inquiries. On the subject of religion they were more particularly alarmed, not only at

the time of the foundation of the society, but at a much later period, when under the direction of Newton himself. Even Bishop Sprat, their first historian, observed, that, "they have freely admitted men of different religions, countries, and professions of life; not to lay the foundation of an English, Scotch, Irish, popish, or protestant philosophy, but a PHILOSOPHY OF MANKIND." A curious protest of the most illustrious of philosophers may be found: when "the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge" were desirous of holding their meetings at the house of the ROYAL SOCIETY, Newton drew up a number of arguments against their admission. One of them is, that "It is a fundamental rule of the society not to meddle with religion; and the reason is, that we may give no occasion to religious bodies to meddle with us." Newton would not even comply with their wishes, lest by this compliance the Royal Society might "dissatisfy those of other religions." The wisdom of the protest by Newton is as admirable as it is remarkable,—the preservation of the Royal Society from the passions of the age.

It was in the lodgings of Dr. Wilkins in Wad-

ham College that a small philosophical club met together, which proved to be, as Aubrey expresses it, the *incunabula* of the Royal Society. When the members were dispersed about London, they renewed their meetings first at a tavern, then at a private house; and when the society became too great to be called a club, they assembled in "the parlour" of Gresham College, which itself had been raised by the munificence of a citizen, who endowed it liberally, and presented a noble example to the individuals now assembled under its roof. The society afterwards derived its title from a sort of accident. The warm loyalty of Evelyn in the first hopeful days of the Restoration, in his dedicatory epistle of Naudé's treatise on libraries, called that philosophical meeting THE ROYAL SOCIETY. These learned men immediately voted their thanks to Evelyn for the happy designation, which was so grateful to Charles II., who was himself a virtuoso of the day, that the charter was soon granted: the king, declaring himself their founder, "sent them a mace of silver gilt, of the same fashion and bigness as those carried before his majesty, to be borne

before the president on meeting days." To the zeal of Evelyn the Royal Society owe no inferior acquisition to its title and its mace: the noble Arundelian library, the rare literary accumulation of the noble Howards; the last possessor of which had so little inclination for books, that the treasures which his ancestors had collected lay open at the mercy of any purloiner. This degenerate heir to the literature and the name of Howard seemed perfectly relieved when Evelyn sent his marbles which were perishing in his gardens, to Oxford, and his books which were diminishing daily, to the Royal Society!

The Society of Antiquaries might create a deeper interest, could we penetrate to its secret history: it was interrupted, and suffered to expire, by some obscure cause of political jealousy. It long ceased to exist, and was only reinstated almost in our own days. The revival of learning under Edward VI. suffered a severe check from the papistical government of Mary; but under Elizabeth a happier era opened to our literary pursuits. At this period several students of the inns of court, many of whose names are illustrious

for their rank or their genius, formed a weekly society, which they called "the Antiquaries' College." From very opposite quarters we are furnished with many curious particulars of their literary intercourse: it is delightful to discover Rawleigh borrowing manuscripts from the library of Sir Robert Cotton, and Selden deriving his studies from the collections of Rawleigh. Their mode of proceeding has even been preserved. At every meeting they proposed a question or two respecting the history or the antiquities of the English nation, on which each member was expected, at the subsequent meeting, to deliver a dissertation or an opinion. They also "supped together." From the days of Athenæus to those of Dr. Johnson, the pleasures of the table have enlivened those of literature. A copy of each question and a summons for the place of conference were sent to the absent members. The opinions were carefully registered by the secretary, and the dissertations deposited in their archives. One of these summonses to Stowe, the antiquary, with his memoranda on the back, exists in the Ashmolean Museum. I shall preserve it with all its verbal *ærugo:*

" Society of Antiquaries.

" To Mr. Stowe.

" The place appointed for a conference upon the question followinge ys att Mr. Garter's house, on Frydaye the 11th of this November, 1598, being Al Soules daye, at 11 of the clocke in the afternoone, where your oppinioun in wrytinge or otherwise is expected.

" The question is,

" Of the antiquitie, etimologie, and priviledges of parishes in Englande.

" Yt ys desyred that you give not notice hereof to any, but such as haue the like somons."

Such is the summons; the memoranda in the hand-writing of Stowe are these:

[630. Honorius Romanus, Archbyshope of Canterbury, devided his province into *parishes*; he ordeyned clerks and prechars, comaunding them that they should instruct the people, as well by good lyfe, as by doctryne.

760. Cuthbert, Archbyshope of Canterbury, procured of the Pope that in cities and townes there should be appoynted church yards for buriall of the dead, whose bodies were used to be buried abrode, & cet.]

Their meetings had hitherto been private; but to give stability to them, they petitioned for a charter of incorporation, under the title of the *Academy for the Study of Antiquity and History founded by Queen Elizabeth.* And to preserve all the memorials of history which the dissolution of the monasteries had scattered about the kingdom, they proposed to erect a library, to be called "The Library of Queen Elizabeth." The death of the queen overturned this honourable project. The society was somewhat interrupted by the usual casualties of human life; the members were dispersed, or died, and it ceased for twenty years. Spelman, Camden, and others, desirous of renovating the society, met for this purpose at the Herald's office; they settled their regulations, among which, one was "for avoiding offence, they should neither meddle with matters of state nor religion." "But before our next meeting," says Spelman, "we had notice that his majesty took *a little mislike of our society*, not being informed that we had resolved to decline all matters of state. Yet hereupon we forbore to meet again, and so all our labour's lost!" Unquestionably much was lost, for much could have

been produced; and Spelman's work on law-terms, where I find this information, was one of the first projected. James I. has incurred the censure of those who have written more boldly than Spelman on the suppression of this society; but whether James was misinformed by "taking a little mislike," or whether the antiquaries failed in exerting themselves to open their plan more clearly to that "timid pedant," as Gough and others designate this monarch, may yet be doubtful; assuredly James was not a man to contemn their erudition!

The king at this time was busied by furthering a similar project, which was to found "King James's College at Chelsea;" a project originating with Dean Sutcliff, and zealously approved by Prince Henry, to raise a nursery for young polemics in scholastical divinity, for the purpose of defending the protestant cause from the attacks of catholics and sectaries; a college which was afterwards called by Laud "Controversy College." In this society were appointed historians and antiquaries, for Camden and Haywood filled these offices.

The Society of Antiquaries, however, though

suppressed, was perhaps never extinct: it survived in some shape under Charles II., for Ashmole in his Diary notices "the Antiquaries' Feast," as well as "the Astrologers'," and another of the "Freemasons." The present society was only incorporated in 1751. There are two sets of their Memoirs; for besides the modern *Archæologia*, we have two volumes of "Curious Discourses," written by the Fathers of the Antiquarian Society in the age of Elizabeth, collected from their dispersed manuscripts, which Camden preserved with a parental hand.

The philosophical spirit of the age, it might have been expected, would have reached our modern antiquaries; but neither profound views, nor eloquent disquisitions, have imparted that value to their confined researches and languid efforts, which the character of the times, and the excellence of our French rivals in their "Academie," so peremptorily required. It is, however, hopeful to hear Mr. Hallam declare, "I think our last volumes improve a little, and but a little! A comparison with the Academy of Inscriptions in its better days must still inspire us with shame."

Among the statutes of the Society of Antiquaries, there is one which expels any member "who shall by speaking, writing, or printing, publicly defame the society." Some things may be too antique and obsolete even for the Society of Antiquaries! and such is this vile restriction! Should there be a stray wit among them, or a critical observer, are they to compromise the freedom of the republic of letters, by the monopolizing spirit of excellence this statute necessarily attributes to their works—and their "gestes?"

QUOTATION.

It is generally supposed that where there is no QUOTATION, there will be found most originality; and as people like to lay out their money according to their notions, our writers usually furnish their pages rapidly with the productions of their own soil: they run up a quick-set hedge, or plant a poplar, and get trees and hedges of this fashion much faster than the former landlords procured their timber. The greater part of our writers, in consequence, have become so original, that no one cares to imitate them; and those who never quote, in return are never quoted!

This is one of the results of that adventurous spirit which is now stalking forth and raging for its own innovations. We have not only rejected AUTHORITY, but have also cast away EXPERIENCE; and often the unburthened vessel is driving to all points of the compass, and the passengers no longer know whither they are going. The wis-

dom of the wise, and the experience of ages, may be preserved by QUOTATION.

It seems, however, agreed, that no one would quote if he could think; and it is not imagined that the well-read may quote from the delicacy of their taste, and the fulness of their knowledge. Whatever is felicitously expressed risks being worse expressed: it is a wretched taste to be gratified with mediocrity when the excellent lies before us. We quote, to save proving what has been demonstrated, referring to where the proofs may be found. We quote, to screen ourselves from the odium of doubtful opinions, which the world would not willingly accept from ourselves; and we may quote from the curiosity which only a quotation itself can give, when in our own words it would be divested of that tint of ancient phrase, that detail of narrative, and that *naïveté*, which we have for ever lost, and which we like to recollect once had an existence.

The ancients, who in these matters were not perhaps such blockheads as some may conceive, considered poetical quotation as one of the requisite ornaments of oratory. Cicero, even in his philosophical works, is as little sparing of quota-

tions as Plutarch. Old Montaigne is so stuffed with them, that he owns, if they were taken out of him little of himself would remain; and yet this never injured that original turn which the old Gascon has given to his thoughts. I suspect that Addison hardly ever composed a Spectator which was not founded on some quotation, noted in those three folio manuscript volumes which he had previously collected; and Addison lasts, while Steele, who always wrote from first impressions and to the times, with perhaps no very inferior genius, has passed away, insomuch that Dr. Beattie once considered that he was obliging the world by collecting Addison's papers, and carefully omitting Steele's.

Quotation, like much better things, has its abuses. One may quote till one compiles. The ancient lawyers used to quote at the bar till they had stagnated their own cause. "Retournons à nos moutons," was the cry of the client. But these vagrant prowlers must be consigned to the beadles of criticism. Such do not always understand the authors whose names adorn their barren pages, and which are taken, too, from the third or the thirtieth hand. Those who trust to such

false quoters will often learn how contrary this transmission is to the sense and application of the original. Every transplantation has altered the fruit of the tree; every new channel, the quality of the stream in its remove from the spring-head. Bayle, when writing on "Comets," discovered this; for having collected many things applicable to his work, as they stood quoted in some modern writers, when he came to compare them with their originals, he was surprised to find that they were nothing for his purpose! the originals conveyed a quite contrary sense to that of the pretended quoters, who often, from innocent blundering, and sometimes from purposed deception, had falsified their quotations. This is an useful story for second-hand authorities!

Selden had formed some notions on this subject of quotations in his "Table-talk," art. "*Books and Authors;*" but, as Le Clerc justly observes, proud of his immense reading, he has too often violated his own precept. "In quoting of books," says Selden, "quote such authors as are usually read; others read for your own satisfaction, but not name them." Now it happens that no writer names more authors, except

Prynne, than the learned Selden. La Mothe le Vayer's curious works consist of fifteen volumes; he is among the greatest quoters. Whoever turns them over will perceive that he is an original thinker, and a great wit; his style, indeed, is meagre, which, as much as his quotations, may have proved fatal to him. But in both these cases it is evident, that even quoters who have abused the privilege of quotation, are not necessarily writers of a mean genius.

The Quoters who deserve the title, and it ought to be an honorary one, are those who trust to no one but themselves. In borrowing a passage, they carefully observe its connexion; they collect authorities, to reconcile any disparity in them before they furnish the one which they adopt; they advance no fact without a witness, and they are not loose and general in their references, as I have been told is our historian Henry so frequently, that it is suspected he deals much in second-hand ware. Bayle lets us into a mystery of author-craft. "Suppose an able man is to prove that an ancient author entertained certain particular opinions, which are only insinuated here and there through his works, I am sure it

will take him up more days to collect the passages which he will have occasion for, than to *argue at random* on those passages. Having once found out his authorities and his quotations, which perhaps will not fill six pages, and may have cost him a month's labour, he may finish in two mornings' work, twenty pages of arguments, objections, and answers to objections; and, consequently, *what proceeds from our own genius sometimes costs much less time than what is requisite for collecting*. Corneille would have required more time to defend a tragedy by a great collection of authorities, than to write it; and I am supposing the same number of pages in the tragedy and in the defence. Heinsius perhaps bestowed more time in defending his *Herodes infanticidæ* against Balzac, than a Spanish (or a Scotch) metaphysician bestows on a large volume of controversy, where he takes all from his own stock." I am somewhat concerned in the truth of this principle. There are articles in the present work occupying but a few pages, which could never have been produced had not more time been allotted to the researches which they contain than some would allow to a small volume, which might excel in

genius, and yet be likely not to be long remembered! All this is labour which never meets the eye. It is quicker work, with special pleading and poignant periods, to fill sheets with generalising principles; those bird's-eye views of philosophy for the *nonce* seem as if things were seen clearer when at a distance and *en masse*, and require little knowledge of the individual parts. Such *an art of writing* may resemble the famous Lullian method, by which the *doctor illuminatus* enabled any one to invent arguments by a machine! Two tables, one of *attributes*, and the other of *subjects*, worked about circularly in a frame, and placed correlatively to one another, produced certain combinations; the number of *questions* multiplied as they were worked! So that here was a mechanical invention, by which they might dispute without end, and write on without any particular knowledge of their subject!

But the pains-taking gentry, when heaven sends them genius enough, are the more instructive sort, and they are those to whom we shall appeal while time and truth can meet together. A well-read writer, with good taste, is one who has the command of the wit of other men; he

searches where knowledge is to be found; and though he may not himself excel in invention, his ingenuity may compose one of those agreeable books, the *deliciæ* of literature, that will out-last the fading meteors of his day. Epicurus is said to have borrowed from no writer in his three hundred inspired volumes, while Plutarch, Seneca, and the elder Pliny, made such free use of their libraries; and it has happened that Epicurus, with his unsubstantial nothingness, has "melted into thin air," while the solid treasures have buoyed themselves up amidst the wrecks of nations.

On this subject of QUOTATION, literary politics, for the commonwealth has its policy and its cabinet-secrets, are more concerned than the reader suspects. Authorities in matters of fact are often called for; in matters of opinion, indeed, which, perhaps, are of more importance, no one requires any authority. But too open and generous a revelation of the chapter and the page of the original quoted, has often proved detrimental to the legitimate honours of the quoter. They are unfairly appropriated by the next comer; the quoter is never quoted, but the authority he has

afforded is produced by his successor with the air of an original research. I have seen MSS. thus confidently referred to, which could never have met the eye of the writer. A learned historian declared to me of a contemporary, that the latter had appropriated his researches; he might, indeed, and he had a right to refer to the same originals; but if his predecessor had opened the sources for him, gratitude is not a silent virtue. Gilbert Stuart thus lived on Robertson: and as Professor Dugald Stewart observes, "his curiosity has seldom led him into any path where the genius and industry of his predecessor had not previously cleared the way." It is for this reason some authors, who do not care to trust to the equity and gratitude of their successors, will not furnish the means of supplanting themselves; for, by not yielding up their authorities, they themselves become one. Some authors, who are pleased at seeing their names occur in the margins of other books than their own, have practised this political management; such as Alexander ab Alexandro, and other compilers of that stamp, to whose labours of small value, we are often obliged to

refer, from the circumstance that they themselves have not pointed out their authorities.

One word more on this long chapter of QUOTATION. To make a happy one is a thing not easily to be done. Cardinal du Perron used to say, that the happy application of a verse from Virgil was worth a talent; and Bayle, perhaps too much prepossessed in their favour, has insinuated, that there is not less invention in a just and happy application of a thought found in a book, than in being the first author of that thought. The art of quotation requires more delicacy in the practice than those conceive who can see nothing more in a quotation than an extract. Whenever the mind of a writer is saturated with the full inspiration of a great author, a quotation gives completeness to the whole; it seals his feelings with undisputed authority. Whenever we would prepare the mind by a forcible appeal, an opening quotation is a symphony preluding on the chords whose tones we are about to harmonize. Perhaps no writers of our times have discovered more of this delicacy of quotation than the author of the "Pursuits of Literature;" and Mr. Southey,

in some of his beautiful periodical investigations, where we have often acknowledged the solemn and striking effect of A QUOTATION FROM OUR ELDER WRITERS.

THE ORIGIN OF DANTE'S INFERNO.

NEARLY six centuries have elapsed since the appearance of the great work of DANTE, and the literary historians of Italy are even now disputing respecting the origin of this poem, singular in its nature and in its excellence. In ascertaining a point so long inquired after, and so keenly disputed, it will rather increase our admiration than detract from the genius of this great poet; and it will illustrate the useful principle, that every great genius is influenced by the objects and the feelings which occupy his own times, only differing from the race of his brothers by the magical force of his developments; the light he sends forth over the world he often catches from the faint and unobserved spark which would die away, and turn to nothing, in another hand.

The *Divina Commedia* of DANTE is a visionary journey through the three realms of the after-life existence; and though in the classical ardour of our poetical pilgrim, he allows his conductor to be a Pagan, the scenes are those of

monkish imagination. The invention of a VISION was the usual vehicle for religious instruction in his age; it was adapted to the genius of the sleeping Homer of a monastery, and to the comprehension, and even to the faith, of the populace, whose minds were then awake to these awful themes.

This mode of writing visions has been imperfectly detected by several modern inquirers. It got into the Fabliaux of the Jongleurs, or Provencal bards, before the days of DANTE; they had these visions or pilgrimages to Hell; the adventures were no doubt solemn to them—but it seemed absurd to attribute the origin of a sublime poem to such inferior, and to us even ludicrous inventions. Every one, therefore, found out some other origin of DANTE's Inferno—since they were resolved to have one—in other works more congenial to its nature; the description of a second life, the melancholy or the glorified scenes of punishment or bliss, with the animated shades of men who were no more, had been opened to the Italian bard by his favourite Virgil, and might have been suggested, according to Warton, by the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero.

But the entire work of DANTE is Gothic; it is a picture of his times, of his own ideas, of the people about him; nothing of classical antiquity resembles it; and although the name of Virgil is introduced into a christian Hades, it is assuredly not the Roman, for Dante's Virgil speaks and acts as the Latin poet could never have done. It is one of the absurdities of DANTE, who, like our Shakspeare, or like Gothic architecture itself, has many things which "lead to nothing" amidst their massive greatness.

Had the Italian and the French commentators, who have troubled themselves on this occasion, known the art which we have happily practised in this country, of illustrating a great national bard, by endeavouring to recover the contemporary writings and circumstances which were connected with his studies and his times, they had long ere this discovered the real framework of the Inferno.

Within the last twenty years it had been rumoured that DANTE had borrowed, or stolen his *Inferno* from "The Vision of Alberico," which was written two centuries before his time. The literary antiquary Bottari had discovered a manu-

script of this Vision of Alberico, and, in haste, made extracts of a startling nature. They were well adapted to inflame the curiosity of those who are eager after any thing new about something old; it throws an air of erudition over the small talker, who otherwise would care little about the original! This was not the first time that the whole edifice of genius had been threatened by the motion of a remote earthquake; but in these cases it usually happens that those early discoverers who can judge of a little part, are in total blindness when they would decide on a whole. A poisonous mildew seemed to have settled on the laurels of DANTE; nor were we relieved from our constant inquiries, till il Sigr. Abbate Cancellieri at Rome, published, in 1814, this much talked of manuscript, and has now enabled us to see and to decide, and even to add the present little article as an useful supplement.

True it is, that DANTE must have read with equal attention and delight, this authentic *vision* of Alberico; for it is given, so we are assured by the whole monastery, as it happened to their ancient brother, when a boy; many a striking, and many a positive resemblance in the "Divina

Commedia" has been pointed out; and Mr. Cary, in his English version of DANTE, so English, that he makes Dante speak in blank verse very much like Dante in stanzas, has observed, that "The reader will, in these marked resemblances, see enough to convince him that Dante *had read this singular work*." The truth is, that the "Vision of Alberico" must not be considered as a *singular* work—but, on the contrary, as the prevalent mode of composition in the monastic ages. It has been ascertained that Alberico was written in the twelfth century, judging of the age of a manuscript by the writing. I shall now preserve a vision which a French antiquary had long ago given, merely with the design to show how the monks abused the simplicity of our Gothic ancestors, and with an utter want of taste for such inventions, he deems the present one to be "monstrous." He has not told us the age in which it was written. This vision, however, exhibits such complete scenes of the *Inferno* of the great poet, that the writer must have read DANTE, or DANTE must have read this writer. The manuscript, with another of the same kind, is in the King's library at Paris, and some future re-

searcher may ascertain the age of these Gothic compositions; doubtless they will be found to belong to the age of Alberico, for they are alike stamped by the same dark and awful imagination, the same depth of feeling, the solitary genius of the monastery!

It may, however, be necessary to observe, that these "Visions" were merely a vehicle for popular instruction; nor must we depend on the age of their composition by the names of the supposititious visionaries affixed to them: they were the satires of the times. The following elaborate views of some scenes in the *Inferno* were composed by an honest monk who was dissatisfied with the bishops, and took this covert means of pointing out how the neglect of their episcopal duties was punished in the after-life; he had an equal quarrel with the feudal nobility for their oppressions: and he even boldly ascended to the throne.

"The Vision of Charles the Bald, of the places of punishment, and the happiness of the just*.

"I, Charles, by the gratuitous gift of God,

* In MSS. Bib. Reg. inter lat. No. 2447, p. 134.

king of the Germans, Roman patrician, and likewise emperor of the Franks;

"On the holy night of Sunday, having performed the divine offices of matins, returning to my bed to sleep, a voice most terrible came to my ear; 'Charles! thy spirit shall now issue from thy body; thou shalt go and behold the judgments of God; they shall serve thee only as presages, and thy spirit shall again return shortly afterwards.' Instantly was my spirit rapt, and he who bore me away was a being of the most splendid whiteness. He put into my hand a ball of thread, which shed about a blaze of light, such as the comet darts when it is apparent. He divided it, and said to me, 'Take thou this thread, and bind it strongly on the thumb of thy right hand, and by this I will lead thee through the infernal labyrinth of punishments.'

"Then going before me with velocity, but always unwinding this luminous thread, he conducted me into deep valleys filled with fires, and wells inflamed, blazing with all sorts of unctuous matter. There I observed the prelates who had served my father and my ancestors. Although I trembled, I still, however, inquired of them to

learn the cause of their torments. They answered 'We are the bishops of your father and your ancestors; instead of uniting them and their people in peace and concord, we sowed among them discord, and were the kindlers of evil: for this are we burning in these Tartarean punishments; we, and other men-slayers and devourers of rapine. Here also shall come your bishops, and that crowd of satellites who surround you, and who imitate the evil we have done.'

"And while I listened to them tremblingly, I beheld the blackest demons flying with hooks of burning iron, who would have caught that ball of thread which I held in my hand, and have drawn it towards them, but it darted such a reverberating light, that they could not lay hold of the thread. These demons, when at my back, hustled to precipitate me into those sulphureous pits; but my conductor, who carried the ball, wound about my shoulder a doubled thread, drawing me to him with such force, that we ascended high mountains of flame, from whence issued lakes and burning streams, melting all kinds of metals. There I found the souls of lords who had served my father and my brothers; some

plunged in up to the hair of their heads, others to their chins, others with half their bodies immersed. These yelling, cried to me, 'It is for inflaming discontents with your father, and your brothers, and yourself, to make war and spread murder and rapine, eager for earthly spoils, that we now suffer these torments in these rivers of boiling metal.' While I was timidly bending over their suffering, I heard at my back the clamour of voices, *potentes potenter tormenta patiuntur!* 'The powerful suffer torments powerfully;' and I looked up, and beheld on the shores boiling streams and ardent furnaces, blazing with pitch and sulphur, full of great dragons, large scorpions, and serpents of a strange species; where also I saw some of my ancestors, princes, and my brothers also, who said to me, 'Alas, Charles! behold our heavy punishment for evil, and for proud malignant counsels, which in our realms and in thine we yielded to from the lust of dominion.' As I was grieving with their groans, dragons hurried on, who sought to devour me with throats opened, belching flame and sulphur. But my leader trebled the thread over me, at whose resplendent light these were overcome. Leading me then

securely, we descended into a great valley, which on one side was dark, except where lighted by ardent furnaces, while the amenity of the other was so pleasant and splendid that I cannot describe it. I turned, however, to the obscure and flaming side; I beheld some kings of my race agonized in great and strange punishments, and I thought how in an instant the huge black giants who in turmoil were working to set this whole valley into flames, would have hurled me into these gulfs; I still trembled, when the luminous thread cheered my eyes, and on the other side of the valley a light for a little while whitened, gradually breaking: I observed two fountains; one, whose waters had extreme heat, the other more temperate and clear; and two large vessels filled with these waters. The luminous thread rested on one of the fervid waters, where I saw my father Louis covered to his thighs, and though labouring in the anguish of bodily pain, he spoke to me. 'My son Charles, fear nothing! I know that thy spirit shall return unto thy body; and God has permitted thee to come here that thou mayst witness, because of the sins I have committed, the punishments I

endure. One day I am placed in the boiling bath of this large vessel, and on another changed into that of more tempered waters: this I owe to the prayers of Saint Peter, Saint Denis, Saint Remy, who are the patrons of our royal house; but if by prayers and masses, offerings and alms, psalmody and vigils, my faithful bishops, and abbots, and even all the ecclesiastical order, assist me, it will not be long before I am delivered from these boiling waters. Look on your left!' I looked, and beheld two tuns of boiling waters. 'These are prepared for thee,' he said, 'if thou wilt not be thy own corrector, and do penance for thy crimes!' Then I began to sink with horror; but my guide perceiving the panic of my spirit, said to me, 'Follow me to the right of the valley bright in the glorious light of Paradise.' I had not long proceeded, when, amidst the most illustrious kings, I beheld my uncle Lotharius seated on a topaz, of marvellous magnitude, crowned with a most precious diadem; and beside him was his son Louis, like him crowned, and seeing me, he spake with a blandishment of air, and a sweetness of voice, 'Charles, my successor, now the third in the Roman empire, approach! I know that thou hast

come to view these places of punishment, where thy father and my brother groans to his destined hour; but still to end by the intercession of the three saints, the patrons of the kings and the people of France. Know that it will not be long ere thou shalt be dethroned, and shortly after thou shalt die!' Then Louis turning towards me: 'Thy Roman empire shall pass into the hands of Louis, the son of my daughter; give him the sovereign authority, and trust to his hands that ball of thread thou holdest.' Directly I loosened it from the finger of my right hand to give the empire to his son. This invested him with empire, and he became brilliant with all light; and at the same instant, admirable to see, my spirit, greatly wearied and broken, returned gliding into my body. Hence let all know whatever happen, that Louis the young possesses the Roman empire destined by God. And so the Lord who reigneth over the living and the dead, and whose kingdom endureth for ever and for aye, will perform when he shall call me away to another life."

The French literary antiquaries judged of these "Visions" with the mere nationality of their taste. Every thing Gothic with them is barbarous, and

they see nothing in the redeeming spirit of genius, nor the secret purpose of these curious documents of the age.

The Vision of Charles the Bald may be found in the ancient chronicles of St. Denis, which were written under the eye of the Abbé Suger, the learned and able minister of Louis the Young, and which were certainly composed before the thirteenth century. The learned writer of the fourth volume of the *Melanges tirés d'une grande Bibliothèque*, who had as little taste for these mysterious visions as the other French critic, apologizes for the venerable Abbé Suger's admission of such visions: "Assuredly," he says, "the Abbe Suger was too wise and too enlightened to believe in similar visions; but if he suffered its insertion, or if he inserted it himself in the chronicle of St. Denis, it is because he felt that such a fable offered an excellent lesson to kings, to ministers and bishops, and it had been well if they had not had worse tales told them." The latter part is as philosophical as the former is the reverse.

In these extraordinary productions of a Gothic age we may assuredly discover DANTE; but what

are they more than the frame-work of his unimitated picture! It is only this mechanical part of his sublime conceptions that we can pretend to have discovered; other poets might have adopted these "Visions," but we should have had no "Divina Commedia." Mr. Carey has finely observed of these pretended origins of DANTE's genius, although Mr. Carey knew only The Vision of Alberico, "It is the scale of magnificence on which this conception was framed, and the wonderful development of it in all its parts, that may justly entitle our poet to rank among the few minds to whom the power of a great creative faculty can be ascribed." Milton might originally have sought the seminal hint of his great work from a sort of Italian mystery. In the words of Dante himself,

> "Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda."
>
> *Il Paradiso*, Can. I.
>
> "——————— From a small spark
> Great flame hath risen."
>
> CAREY.

After all, DANTE has said in a letter, "I found the ORIGINAL of MY HELL in the WORLD which we

inhabit;" and he said a greater truth than some literary antiquaries can always comprehend *!

* In the recent edition of DANTE, by Romanis, in four volumes, quarto, the last preserves the Vision of Alberico, and a strange correspondence on its publication; the resemblances in numerous passages are pointed out. It is curious to observe that the good Catholic *Abbate Cancellieri*, at *first* maintained the *authenticity of the Vision*, by alleging that *similar revelations* have not been unusual!—the Caveliere *Gherardi Rossi* attacked the whole as the crude legend of a boy who was only made the instrument of the monks, and was either a liar, or a parrot! We may express our astonishment that at the present day, a subject of mere literary inquiry should have been involved with "the faith of the Roman church." Cancellieri becomes at length submissive to the lively attacks of Rossi,—and the editor gravely adds his "conclusion" which had nearly concluded nothing! He discovers pictures, sculptures, and a mystery acted, as well as Visions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, from which he imagines the Inferno, the Purgatorio, and the Paradiso, owe their first conception. The originality of DANTE, however, is maintained on a right principle; that the poet only employed the ideas and the materials which he found in his own country and his own times.

OF A HISTORY OF EVENTS WHICH HAVE NOT HAPPENED.

Such a title might serve for a work of not incurious nor unphilosophical speculation, which might enlarge our general views of human affairs, and assist our comprehension of those events which are enrolled on the registers of history. The scheme of Providence is carrying on sublunary events, by means inscrutable to us,

"A mighty maze, but not without a plan!"

Some mortals have recently written history, and "Lectures on History," who presume to explain the great scene of human affairs, affecting the same familiarity with the designs of Providence, as with the events which they compile from human authorities. Every party discovers in the events which at first were adverse to their own cause but finally terminate in their favour, that Providence had used a peculiar and particular interference: this is a source of human error, and intolerant prejudice. The Jesuit Mariana, exulting over the destruction of the kingdom and

nation of the Goths in Spain, observes, that "It was by a particular providence, that out of their ashes might rise *a new and holy Spain, to be the bulwark of the Catholic religion;*" and unquestionably he would have adduced as proofs of this "holy Spain," the establishment of the inquisition, and the dark idolatrous bigotry of that hoodwinked people. But a protestant will not sympathize with the feelings of the Jesuit; yet the protestants too, will discover particular providences, and magnify human events into supernatural ones. This custom has long prevailed among fanatics: we have had books published by individuals of "particular providences," which, as they imagined, had fallen to their lot; they are called "passages of providence;" and one I recollect by a cracked-brained puritan, whose experience never went beyond his own neighbourhood, but who having a very bad temper, and many whom he considered his enemies, wrote down all the misfortunes which happened to them as acts of "particular providences," and valued his blessedness on the efficacy of his curses!

Without venturing to penetrate into the mys-

teries of the present order of human affairs, and the great scheme of fatality or of accident, it may be sufficiently evident to us, that often on a single event revolve the fortunes of men and of nations.

An eminent writer has speculated on the defeat of Charles I. at Worcester, as "one of those events which most strikingly exemplify how much better events are disposed of by Providence, than they would be if the direction were left to the choice even of the best and the wisest men." He proceeds to show, that a royal victory must have been succeeded by other severe struggles, and by different parties. A civil war would have contained within itself another civil war. One of the blessings of his defeat at Worcester was, that it left the commonwealth's men masters of the three kingdoms, and afforded them "full leisure to complete and perfect their own structure of government. The experiment was fairly tried; there was nothing from without to disturb the process; it went on duly from change to change." The close of this history is well known. Had the royalists obtained the victory at Worcester, the commonwealth party might have obstinately per-

sisted, that had their republic not been overthrown, "their free and liberal government" would have diffused its universal happiness through the three kingdoms. This idea is ingenious; and might have been pursued in my proposed "History of Events which have not happened," under the title of "The Battle of Worcester won by Charles II." The chapter, however, would have had a brighter close, if the sovereign and the royalists had proved themselves better men than the knaves and fanatics of the commonwealth. It is not for us to scrutinize into "the ways" of Providence; but if Providence conducted Charles II. to the throne, it appears to have deserted him when there.

Historians, for a particular purpose, have sometimes amused themselves with a detail of an event which did not happen. A history of this kind we find in the ninth book of Livy; and it forms a digression, where, with his delightful copiousness, he reasons on the probable consequences which would have ensued had Alexander the Great invaded Italy. Some Greek writers, to raise the Parthians to an equality with the Romans, had insinuated that the great name of this military

monarch, who is said never to have lost a battle, would have intimidated the Romans, and would have checked their passion for universal dominion. The patriotic Livy, disdaining that the glory of his nation, which had never ceased from war for nearly eight hundred years, should be put in competition with the career of a young conqueror, which had scarcely lasted ten, enters into a parallel of "man with man, general with general, and victory with victory." In the full charm of his imagination he brings Alexander down into Italy, he invests him with all his virtues, and "dusks their lustre" with all his defects. He arranges the Macedonian army, while he exultingly shows five Roman armies at that moment pursuing their conquests; and he cautiously counts the numerous allies who would have combined their forces; he even descends to compare the weapons and the modes of warfare of the Macedonians with those of the Romans. Livy, as if he had caught a momentary panic at the first success which had probably attended Alexander in his descent into Italy, brings forward the great commanders he would have had to encounter; he compares Alexander with each,

and at length terminates his fears, and claims his triumph, by discovering that the Macedonians had but one Alexander, while the Romans had several. This beautiful digression in Livy is a model for the narrative of an event which never happened.

The Saracens from Asia had spread into Africa, and at length possessed themselves of Spain. Eude, a discontented Duke of Guienne, in France, had been vanquished by Charles Martel, who derived that humble but glorious surname from the event we are now to record. Charles had left Eude the enjoyment of his dukedom, provided that he held it as a fief of the crown; but blind with ambition and avarice, Eude adopted a scheme which threw Christianity itself, as well as Europe, into a crisis of peril which has never since occurred. By marrying a daughter with a Mahometan emir, he rashly began an intercourse with the Ishmaelites, one of whose favourite projects was, to plant a formidable colony of their faith in France. An army of four hundred thousand combatants, as the chroniclers of the time affirm, were seen descending into Guienne, possessing themselves in one day of his domains;

and Eude soon discovered what sort of workmen he had called, to do that of which he himself was so incapable. Charles, with equal courage and prudence, beheld this heavy tempest bursting over the whole country; and to remove the first cause of this national evil, he reconciled the discontented Eude, and detached the duke from his fatal alliance. But the Saracens were fast advancing through Touraine, and had reached Tours by the river Loire: Abderam, the chief of the Saracens, anticipated a triumph in the multitude of his infantry, his cavalry, and his camels, exhibiting a military warfare unknown in France; he spread out his mighty army to surround the French, and to take them, as it were, in a net. The appearance terrified, and the magnificence astonished. Charles, collecting his far inferior forces, assured them that they had no other France than the spot they covered. He had ordered that the city of Tours should be closed on every Frenchman, unless he entered it victorious; and he took care that every fugitive should be treated as an enemy by bodies of *gens d'armes*, whom he placed to watch at the wings of his army. The combat was furious. The

astonished Mahometan beheld his battalions defeated as he urged them on singly to the French, who on that day had resolved to offer their lives as an immolation to their mother-country. Eude on that day, ardent to clear himself from the odium which he had incurred, with desperate valour, taking a wide compass, attacked his new allies in the rear. The camp of the Mahometan was forced: the shrieks of his women and children reached him from amidst the massacre; terrified, he saw his multitude shaken. Charles, who beheld the light breaking through this dark cloud of men, exclaimed to his countrymen, "My friends, God has raised his banner, and the unbelievers perish!" The mass of the Saracens, though broken, could not fly; their own multitude pressed themselves together, and the Christian sword mowed down the Mahometans. Abderam was found dead in a vast heap, unwounded, stifled by his own multitude. Historians record that three hundred and sixty thousand Saracens perished on *la journée de Tours;* but their fears and their joy probably magnified their enemies. Thus Charles saved his own country, and, at that moment, all the rest of Europe, from this deluge of people

which had poured down from Asia and Africa. Every Christian people returned a solemn thanksgiving, and saluted their deliverer as "the Hammer" of France. But the Saracens were not conquered; Charles did not even venture on their pursuit; and a second invasion proved almost as terrifying; army still poured down on army, and it was long, and after many dubious results, that the Saracens were rooted out of France. Such is the history of one of the most important events which has passed; but that of an event which did not happen, would be the result of this famous conflict, had the Mahometan power triumphed! The Mahometan dominion had predominated through Europe! The imagination is startled when it discovers how much depended on this invasion, at a time when there existed no political state in Europe, no balance of power in one common tie of confederation! A single battle, and a single treason, had before made the Mahometans sovereigns of Spain. We see that the same events had nearly been repeated in France; and had the crescent towered above the cross, as every appearance promised to the Saracenic hosts, the least of our evils had now been, that

we should have worn turbans, combed our beards instead of shaving them, have beheld a more magnificent architecture than the Grecian, while the public mind had been bounded by the arts and literature of the Moorish university of Cordova!

One of the great revolutions of modern Europe, perhaps, had not occurred, had the personal feelings of Luther been respected, and had his personal interest been consulted. Guicciardini, whose veracity we cannot suspect, has preserved a fact which proves how very nearly some important events which have taken place, might not have happened! I transcribe the passage from his thirteenth book. " Cæsar (the Emperor Charles V.) after he had given an hearing in the Diet of Worms to Martin Luther, and caused his opinions to be examined by a number of divines, who reported that his doctrine was erroneous and pernicious to the Christian religion, had, to gratify the pontiff, put him under the ban of the empire, which so terrified Martin, that, if the injurious and threatening words which were given him by Cardinal *San Sisto*, the apostolical legate, had not thrown him into the utmost despair, it is believed it would have been easy, by giving him

some preferment, or providing for him some honourable way of living, to make him renounce his errors." By this we may infer, that one of the true authors of the Reformation was this very apostolical legate; they had succeeded in terrifying Luther, but they were not satisfied till they had insulted him; and with such a temper as Luther's, the sense of personal insult would remove even that of terror; it would unquestionably survive it. A similar proceeding with Franklin, from our ministers, is said to have produced the same effect with that political sage. What Guicciardini has told of Luther preserves the sentiment of the times. Charles V. was so fully persuaded that he could have put down the Reformation, had he rid himself at once of the chief, that having granted Luther a safe-guard to appear at the Council at Worms, in his last moments he repented, as of a sin, that having had Luther in his hands, he suffered him to escape; for to have violated his faith with a heretic he held to be no crime!

In the history of religion, human instruments have been permitted to be the great movers of its chief revolutions; and the most important

events concerning national religions appear to have depended on the passions of individuals, and the circumstances of the time. Impure means have often produced the most glorious results; and this, perhaps, may be among the dispensations of Providence.

A similar transaction occurred in Europe and in Asia. The motives and conduct of Constantine the Great, in the alliance of the Christian faith with his government, are far more obvious than any one of those qualities with which the panegyric of Eusebius so vainly cloaks over the crimes and unchristian life of this polytheistical Christian. In adopting the new faith as a *coup d'état*, and by investing the church with temporal power, at which Dante so indignantly exclaims, he founded the religion of Jesus, but corrupted its guardians. The same occurrence took place in France under Clovis. The fabulous religion of Paganism was fast on its decline; Clovis had resolved to unite the four different principalities, which divided Gaul, into one empire. In the midst of an important battle, as fortune hung doubtful between the parties, the Pagan monarch invoked the god of his fair Christian queen, and

obtained the victory ! St. Remi found no difficulty in persuading Clovis, after the fortunate event, to adopt the Christian creed. Political reasons for some time suspended the king's open conversion, at length the Franks followed their sovereign to the baptismal fonts. According to Pasquier, Naudé, and other political writers, these recorded miracles*, like those of Constantine, were but inventions to authorize the change of religion. Clovis used the new creed as a lever by whose machinery he would be enabled to crush the petty princes his neighbours ; and, like Constantine, Clovis, sullied by crimes of as dark a die, obtained the title of " the Great." Had not the most capricious " Defender of the Faith" been influenced by the most violent of passions, the

* The miracles of Clovis consisted of a shield, which was picked up after having fallen from the skies ; the anointing oil, conveyed from Heaven by a white dove in a phial, which, till the reign of Louis XVI., consecrated the kings of France ; and the oriflamme, or standard with golden flames, long suspended over the tomb of St. Denis, which the French kings only raised over the tomb when their crown was in imminent peril. No future king of France can be anointed with the *sainte ampoule*, or oil brought down to earth by a white dove ; in 1794 it was broken by some profane hand, and antiquaries have since agreed that it was only an ancient lachrymatory !

Reformation, so feebly and so imperfectly begun and continued, had possibly never freed England from the papal thraldom ;

" For gospel-light first beam'd from Bullen's eyes."

The catholic Ward, in his singular Hudibrastic poem of " England's Reformation," in some odd rhymes, has characterized it by a *naïveté*, which we are much too delicate to repeat. The catholic writers censure Philip for recalling the Duke of Alva from the Netherlands. According to these humane politicians, the unsparing sword, and the penal fires of this resolute captain, had certainly accomplished the fate of the heretics ; for angry lions, however numerous, would find their numerical force diminished by gibbets, and pitholes. We have lately been informed by a curious Writer that Protestantism once existed in Spain, and was actually extirpated at the moment by the crushing arm of the inquisition*. According to these catholic politicians, a great event in catholic history did not occur—the spirit of catholicism, predominant in a land of protestants

* This fact was probably quite unknown to us, till it was given in the *Quarterly Review*, Vol. XXIX.

—from the Spanish monarch failing to support Alva in finishing what he had begun! Had the armada of Spain safely landed, with the benedictions of Rome, in England!—at a moment when our own fleet was short of gunpowder, and at a time when the English catholics formed a powerful party in the nation—we might now be going to Mass!

After his immense conquests, had Gustavus Adolphus not perished in the battle of Lutzen, where his genius obtained a glorious victory, unquestionably a wonderful change had operated on the affairs of Europe; the protestant cause had balanced, if not preponderated, over the catholic interest; and Austria, which appeared a sort of universal monarchy, had seen her eagle's wings clipped. But "the Anti-Christ," as Gustavus was called by the priests of Spain and Italy, the saviour of protestantism, as he is called by England and Sweden, whose death occasioned so many bonfires among the catholics, that the Spanish court interfered lest fuel should become too scarce at the approaching winter—Gustavus fell—the fit hero for one of those great events which have never happened!

On the first publication of the "Icon Basiliké" of Charles the First, the instantaneous effect produced on the nation was such, fifty editions it is said, appearing in one year, that Mr. Malcolm Laing observes, that "had this book," a sacred volume to those who considered that sovereign as a martyr, "appeared a *week sooner*, it might have preserved the king," and possibly, have produced a reaction of popular feeling! The chivalrous Dundee made an offer to James II., which, had it been acted on, Mr. Laing acknowledges might have produced another change! What then had become of our "glorious Revolution," which from its earliest step, throughout the reign of William, was still vacillating amidst the unstable opinions and contending interests of so many of its first movers?

The great political error of Cromwell is acknowledged by all parties to have been the adoption of the French interest in preference to the Spanish; a strict alliance with Spain had preserved the balance of Europe, enriched the commercial industry of England, and above all, had checked the overgrowing power of the French government. Before Cromwell had contributed

to the predominance of the French power, the French Huguenots were of consequence enough to secure an indulgent treatment. The parliament, as Elizabeth herself had formerly done, considered so powerful a party in France as useful allies; and anxious to extend the principles of the Reformation, and to further the suppression of popery, the parliament had once listened to, and had even commenced a treaty with, deputies from Bourdeaux, the purport of which was the assistance of the French Huguenots in their scheme of forming themselves into a republic, or independent state; but Cromwell, on his usurpation, not only overthrew the design, but is believed to have betrayed it to Mazarine. What a change in the affairs of Europe had Cromwell adopted the Spanish interests, and assisted the French Huguenots in becoming an independent state! The revocation of the edict of Nantes, and the increase of the French dominion, which so long afterwards disturbed the peace of Europe, were the consequence of this fatal error of Cromwell's. The independent state of the French Huguenots, and the reduction of ambitious France, perhaps,

to a secondary European power, had saved Europe from the scourge of the French revolution!

The elegant pen of Mr. Roscoe has lately afforded me another curious sketch of a *history of events which have not happened.*

M. De Sismondi imagines, against the opinion of every historian, that the death of Lorenzo de' Medici was a matter of indifference to the prosperity of Italy; as "he could not have prevented the different projects which had been matured in the French cabinet, for the invasion and conquest of Italy; and therefore he concludes that all historians are mistaken who bestow on Lorenzo the honour of having preserved the peace of Italy, because the great invasion that overthrew it did not take place till two years after his death." Mr. Roscoe has philosophically vindicated the honour which his hero has justly received, by employing the principle which in this article has been developed. "Though Lorenzo de' Medici could not perhaps have prevented the important events that took place in other nations of Europe, it by no means follows that the life or death of Lorenzo were equally indifferent to the affairs of

Italy, or that circumstances would have been the same in case he had lived, as in the event of his death." Mr. Roscoe then proceeds to show how Lorenzo's "prudent measures, and proper representations, might probably have prevented the French expedition, which Charles VIII. was frequently on the point of abandoning. Lorenzo would not certainly have taken the precipitate measures of his son Piero, in surrendering the Florentine fortresses. His family would not in consequence have been expelled the city; a powerful mind might have influenced the discordant politics of the Italian princes in one common defence; a slight opposition to the fugitive army of France, at the pass of Faro, might have given the French sovereigns a wholesome lesson, and prevented those bloody contests that were soon afterwards renewed in Italy. *As a single remove at Chess varies the whole game,* so the death of an individual of such importance in the affairs of Europe as Lorenzo de' Medici, could not fail of producing such a change in its political relations, as must have varied them in an incalculable degree." Pignotti also describes the state of Italy at this time. Had Lorenzo lived to have seen

his son elevated to the papacy, this historian, adopting our present principle, exclaims, "A happy era for Italy and Tuscany HAD THEN OCCURRED! On this head we can, indeed, be only allowed to conjecture; but the fancy, guided by reason, may expatiate at will in this *imaginary state*, and contemplate Italy reunited by a stronger bond, flourishing under its own institutions and arts, and delivered from all those lamented struggles which occurred within so short a period of time."

Whitaker in his "Vindication of Mary Queen of Scots," has a speculation in the true spirit of this article. When such dependence was made upon Elizabeth's dying without issue, the Countess of Shrewsbury had her son purposely residing in London, with two good and able horses continually ready to give the earliest intelligence of the sick Elizabeth's death to the imprisoned Mary. On this the historian observes, "And had this *not improbable event actually taken place what a different complexion would our history have assumed from what it wears at present!* Mary would have been carried from a prison to a throne. Her wise conduct in prison would have been ap-

plauded by all. From Tutbury, from Sheffield, and from Chatsworth, she would have been said to have touched with a gentle and masterly hand the springs that actuated all the nation, against the death of her tyrannical cousin," *&c.* So ductile is history in the hands of man ! and so peculiarly does it bend to the force of success, and warp with the warmth of prosperity !

Thus important events have been nearly occurring, which, however, did not take place ; and others have happened which may be traced to accident, and to the character of an individual. We shall enlarge our conception of the nature of human events, and gather some useful instruction in our historical reading, by pausing at intervals ; contemplating, for a moment, *on certain events which have not happened !*

OF FALSE POLITICAL REPORTS.

"A FALSE report, if believed during three days, may be of great service to a government." This political maxim has been ascribed to Catherine of Medici, an adept in *coups d'état*, the *arcana imperii!* Between solid lying and disguised truth there is a difference known to writers skilled in "the art of governing mankind by deceiving them;" as politics, ill understood, have been defined, and as are all party-politics. These forgers prefer to use the truth disguised, to the gross fiction. When the real truth can no longer be concealed, then they can confidently refer to it; for they can still explain and obscure, while they secure on their side the party whose cause they have advocated. A curious reader of history may discover the temporary and sometimes the lasting advantages of spreading rumours designed to disguise, or to counteract the real state of things. Such reports, set a going, serve to break down the sharp and fatal point of a panic, which might instantly occur; in this way the

public is saved from the horrors of consternation, and the stupefaction of despair. These rumours give a breathing time to prepare for the disaster, which is doled out cautiously ; and, as might be shown, in some cases these first reports have left an event in so ambiguous a state, that a doubt may still arise whether these reports were really so destitute of truth ! Such reports, once printed, enter into history, and sadly perplex the honest historian. Of a battle fought in a remote situation, both parties for a long time, at home, may dispute the victory after the event, and the pen may prolong what the sword had long decided. This has been no unusual circumstance : of several of the most important battles on which the fate of Europe has hung, were we to rely on some reports of the time, we might still doubt of the manner of the transaction. A skirmish has been often raised into an *arranged* battle, and a defeat concealed, in an account of the killed and wounded, while victory has been claimed by both parties! Villeroy, in all his encounters with Marlborough, always sent home despatches by which no one could suspect that he was discomfited. Pompey, after his fatal battle with Cæsar, sent

letters to all the provinces and cities of the Romans, describing with greater courage than he had fought, so that a report generally prevailed that Cæsar had lost the battle! Plutarch informs us, that three hundred writers had described the battle of Marathon. Many doubtless had copied their predecessors; but it would perhaps have surprised us to have observed how materially some differed in their narratives.

In looking over a collection of manuscript letters of the times of James the First, I was struck by the contradictory reports of the result of the famous battle of Lutzen, so glorious and so fatal to Gustavus Adolphus; the victory was sometimes reported to have been obtained by the Swedes; but a general uncertainty, a sort of mystery, agitated the majority of the nation, who were staunch to the protestant cause. This state of anxious suspense lasted a considerable time. The fatal truth gradually came *out in reports changing in their progress;* if the victory was allowed, the death of the Protestant Hero closed all hope! The historian of Gustavus Adolphus observes on this occasion, that "Few couriers were better received than those who conveyed

the accounts of the king's death to declared enemies or concealed ill-wishers; nor did the report greatly displease the court of Whitehall, where the ministry, as it usually happens in cases of timidity, had its degree of apprehensions for fear the event should not be true; and, as I have learnt from good authority, imposed silence on the news-writers, and intimated the same to the pulpit in case any funeral encomium might proceed from that quarter." Although the motive assigned by the writer, that of the secret indisposition of the cabinet of James the First towards the fortunes of Gustavus, is to me by no means certain; unquestionably the knowledge of this disastrous event was long kept back by "a timid ministry," and the fluctuating reports probably regulated by their designs.

The same circumstance occurred on another important event in modern history, where we may observe the artifice of party writers in disguising or suppressing the real fact. This was the famous battle of the Boyne. The French catholic party long reported that Count Lauzun had won the battle, and that William III. was killed. Bussy Rabutin in some memoirs, in which he appears

to have registered public events without scrutinizing their truth, says, "I chronicled this account according as the first reports gave out, when at length the real fact reached them, the party did not like to lose their pretended victory." Pere Londel, who published a register of the times, which is favourably noticed in the "Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres," for 1699, has recorded the event in this deceptive manner: "The battle of the Boyne in Ireland; Schomberg is killed there at the head of the English." This is "an equivocator!" The writer resolved to conceal the defeat of James's party, and cautiously suppresses any mention of a victory, but very carefully gives a real fact, by which his readers would hardly doubt of the defeat of the English! We are so accustomed to this traffic of false reports, that we are scarcely aware that many important events recorded in history were in their day strangely disguised by such mystifying accounts. This we can only discover by reading private letters written at the moment. Bayle has collected several remarkable absurdities of this kind, which were spread abroad to answer a temporary purpose, but which had never been

known to us had these contemporary letters not been published. A report was prevalent in Holland in 1580, that the kings of France and Spain and the Duke of Alva were dead; a felicity which for a time sustained the exhausted spirits of the revolutionists. At the invasion of the Spanish Armada, Burleigh spread reports of the thumb-screws, and other instruments of torture, which the Spaniards had brought with them, and thus inflamed the hatred of the nation. The horrid story of the bloody Colonel Kirke is considered as one of those political forgeries to serve the purpose of blackening a zealous partisan.

False reports are sometimes stratagems of war. When the chiefs of the league had lost the battle at Ivry, with an army broken and discomfited, they still kept possession of Paris merely by imposing on the inhabitants all sorts of false reports, such as the death of the king of Navarre, at the fortunate moment when victory, undetermined on which side to incline, turned for the leaguers; and they gave out false reports of a number of victories they had elsewhere obtained. Such tales, distributed in pamphlets and ballads among a people agitated by doubts, and fears,

are gladly believed; flattering their wishes, or soothing their alarms, they contribute to their ease, and are too agreeable to allow of time for reflection.

The history of a report creating a panic may be traced in the Irish insurrection, in the curious memoirs of James II. A forged proclamation of the Prince of Orange was set forth by one Speke, and a rumour spread that the Irish troops were killing and burning in all parts of the kingdom! A panic-like magic instantly run through the people, so that in one quarter of the town of Drogheda they imagined that the other was filled with blood and ruins. During this panic pregnant women miscarried, aged persons died with terror, while the truth was, that the Irish themselves were disarmed and dispersed, in utter want of a meal or a lodging!

In the unhappy times of our civil wars under Charles the First, the newspapers and the private letters afford specimens of this political contrivance of false reports of every species. No extravagance of invention to spread a terror against a party was too gross, and the city of London was one day alarmed that the royalists

were occupied by a plan of blowing up the river Thames, by an immense quantity of powder warehoused at the river-side ; and that there existed an organized though invisible brotherhood of many thousands with *consecrated knives ;* and those who hesitated to give credit to such rumours were branded as malignants, who took not the danger of the parliament to heart. Forged conspiracies and reports of great but distant victories were inventions to keep up the spirit of a party, but oftener prognosticated some intended change in the government. When they were desirous of augmenting the army, or introducing new garrisons, or using an extreme measure with the city, or the royalists, there was always a new conspirary set afloat ; or when any great affair was to be carried in parliament, letters of great victories were published to dishearten the opposition, and infuse additional boldness in their own party. If the report lasted only a few days, it obtained its purpose, and verified the observation of Catharine of Medicis. Those politicians who raise such false reports obtain their end : like the architect, who, in building an arch, supports it with circular props

and pieces of timber, or any temporary rubbish, till he closes the arch; and when it can support itself, he throws away the props! There is no class of political lying which can want for illustration if we consult the records of our civil wars; there we may trace the whole art in all the nice management of its shades, its qualities, and its more complicate parts, from invective to puff, and from inuendo to prevarication! we may admire the scrupulous correction of a lie which they had told, by another which they are telling! and triple lying to over-reach their opponents; royalists and parliamentarians were alike; for, to tell one great truth, "the father of lies" is of no party!

As "nothing is new under the sun," so this art of deceiving the public was unquestionably practised among the ancients. Syphax sent Scipio word that he could not unite with the Romans, but, on the contrary, had declared for the Carthaginians. The Roman army were then anxiously waiting for his expected succours: Scipio was careful to show the utmost civility to these ambassadors, and ostentatiously treated them with presents, that his soldiers might be-

lieve they were only returning to hasten the army of Syphax to join the Romans. Livy censures the Roman consul, who, after the defeat at Cannæ, told the deputies of the allies the whole loss they had sustained: "This consul," says Livy, "by giving too faithful and open an account of his defeat, made both himself and his army appear still more contemptible." The result of the simplicity of the consul was, that the allies, despairing that the Romans would ever recover their losses, deemed it prudent to make terms with Hannibal. Plutarch tells an amusing story, in his way, of the natural progress of a report, which was contrary to the wishes of the government; the unhappy reporter suffered punishment as long as the rumour prevailed, though at last it proved true. A stranger landing from Sicily, at a barber's shop delivered all the particulars of the defeat of the Athenians; of which, however, the people were yet uninformed. The barber leaves untrimmed the reporter's beard, and flies away to vent the news in the city, where he told the Archons what he had heard. The whole city was thrown into a ferment. The Archons called an assembly of the people, and produced the luckless barber, who in

his confusion could not give any satisfactory account of the first reporter. He was condemned as a spreader of false news, and a disturber of the public quiet; for the Athenians could not imagine but that they were invincible! The barber was dragged to the wheel and tortured, till the disaster was more than confirmed. Bayle, referring to this story observes, that had the barber reported a victory, though it had proved to be false, he would not have been punished; a shrewd observation, which occurred to him from his recollection of the fate of Stratocles. This person persuaded the Athenians to perform a public sacrifice and thanksgiving for a victory obtained at sea, though he well knew at the time that the Athenian fleet had been totally defeated. When the calamity could no longer be concealed, the people charged him with being an impostor; but Stratocles saved his life and mollified their anger by the pleasant turn he gave to the whole affair. "Have I done you any injury?" said he. "Is it not owing to me that you have spent three days in the pleasures of victory?" I think that this spreader of good, but fictitious news, should have occupied the wheel of the luckless barber, who had spread

bad but true news; for the barber had no intention of deception, but Stratocles had; and the question here to be tried, was not the truth or the falsity of the reports, but whether the reporters intended to deceive their fellow-citizens? The "Chronicle" and the "Post" must be challenged on such a jury, and all the race of news-scribes, whom Patin characterizes as *hominum genus audacissimum mendacissimum avidissimum.* Latin superlatives are too rich to suffer a translation. But what Patin says in his letter 356 may be applied: "These writers insert in their papers things they do not know, and ought not to write. It is the same trick that is playing which was formerly played; it is the very same farce, only it is exhibited by new actors. The worst circumstance, I think, in this, is, that this trick will continue playing a long course of years, and that the public suffer a great deal too much by it."

OF SUPPRESSORS AND DILAPIDATORS OF MANUSCRIPTS.

Manuscripts are suppressed or destroyed from motives which require to be noticed. Plagiarists, at least, have the merit of preservation: they may blush at their artifices, and deserve the pillory, but their practices do not incur the capital crime of felony. Serassi, the writer of the curious life of Tasso, was guilty of an extraordinary suppression in his zeal for the poet's memory. The story remains to be told, for it is little known.

Galileo, in early life, was a lecturer at the university of Pisa: delighting in poetical studies, he was then more of a critic than a philosopher, and had Ariosto by heart. This great man caught the literary mania which broke out about his time, when the Cruscans so absurdly began their "Controversie Tassesche," and raised up two poetical factions, which infected the Italians with a national fever. Tasso and Ariosto were perpetually weighed and outweighed against each other; Galileo wrote annotations on Tasso, stanza after stanza, and without reserve, treat-

ing the majestic bard with a severity which must have thrown the Tassoists into an agony. Our critic lent his manuscript to Jacopo Mazzoni, who, probably being a disguised Tassoist, by some unaccountable means contrived that the manuscript should be absolutely lost!—to the deep regret of the author and all the Ariostoists. The philosopher descended to his grave—not without occasional groans—nor without exulting reminiscences of the blows he had in his youth inflicted on the great rival of Ariosto—and the rumour of such a work long floated on tradition! Two centuries had nearly elapsed, when Serassi, employed on his elaborate life of Tasso, among his uninterrupted researches in the public libraries of Rome, discovered a miscellaneous volume, in which, on a cursory examination, he found deposited the lost manuscript of Galileo! It was a shock from which, perhaps, the zealous biographer of Tasso never fairly recovered; the awful name of Galileo sanctioned the asperity of critical decision, and more particularly the severe remarks on the language; a subject on which the Italians are so morbidly delicate, and so trivially grave. Serassi's conduct on this occasion

was at once political, timorous, and cunning. Gladly would he have annihilated the original, but this was impossible! It was some consolation that the manuscript was totally unknown—for having got mixed with others, it had accidentally been passed over, and not entered into the catalogue; his own diligent eye only had detected its existence. "*Nessuno fin ora sa, fuori di me, se vi sia, nè dove sia, e cosi non potrà darsi alla luce,*" &c. But in the true spirit of a collector, avaricious of all things connected with his pursuits, Serassi cautiously, but completely, transcribed the precious manuscript, with an intention, according to his memorandum, to unravel all its sophistry. However, although the Abbate never wanted leisure, he persevered in his silence; yet he often trembled lest some future explorer of manuscripts might be found as sharp-sighted as himself. He was so cautious as not even to venture to note down the library where the manuscript was to be found, and to this day no one appears to have fallen on the volume! On the death of Serassi, his papers came to the hands of the Duke of Ceri, a lover of literature; the transcript of the yet undiscovered original

was then revealed! and this secret history of the manuscript was drawn from a note on the title-page written by Serassi himself. To satisfy the urgent curiosity of the literati, these annotations on Tasso by Galileo were published in 1793. Here is a work, which, from its earliest stage, much pains had been taken to suppress; but Serassi's collecting passion inducing him to preserve what he himself so much wished should never appear, finally occasioned its publication! It adds one evidence to the many, which prove that such sinister practices have been frequently used by the historians of a party, poetic or politic.

Unquestionably this entire suppression of manuscripts has been too frequently practised. It is suspected that our historical antiquary Speed owed many obligations to the learned Hugh Broughton, for he possessed a vast number of his MSS. which he burnt. Why did he burn? If persons place themselves in suspicious situations, they must not complain if they be suspected. We have had historians who, whenever they met with information which has not suited their historical system, or their inveterate prejudices,

have employed interpolations, castrations, and forgeries, and in some cases have annihilated the entire document. Leland's invaluable manuscripts were left at his death in the confused state in which the mind of the writer had sunk, overcome by his incessant labours, when this royal antiquary was employed by Henry VIII. to write our national antiquities. His scattered manuscripts were long a common prey to many who never acknowledged their fountain head; among these suppressors and dilapidators pre-eminently stands the crafty Italian Polydore Vergil, who not only drew largely from this source, but, to cover the robbery, did not omit to depreciate the father of our antiquities—an act of a piece with the character of the man, who is said to have collected and burnt a greater number of historical MSS. than would have loaded a waggon, to prevent the detection of the numerous fabrications in his history of England, which was composed to gratify Mary and the catholic cause.

The Harleian manuscript, 7379, is a collection of state-letters. This MS. has four leaves entirely torn out, and is accompanied by this

extraordinary memorandum, signed by the principal librarian.

"Upon examination of this book, Nov. 12, 1764, these four last leaves were torn out.

"C. Morton.

"Mem. Nov. 12, sent down to Mrs. Macaulay."

As no memorandum of the name of any student to whom a manuscript is delivered for his researches was ever made before or since, or in the nature of things will ever be, this memorandum must involve our female historian in the obloquy of this dilapidation*. Such dishonest practices of party feeling, indeed, are not peculiar to any party. In Mr. Roscoe's interesting "Illustra-

* It is now about twenty-seven years ago since I first published this anecdote; at the same time I received information that our female historian and dilapidator had acted in this manner more than once. At that distance of time this rumour so notorious at the British Museum it was impossible to authenticate. The Rev. William Graham, the surviving husband of Mrs. Macaulay, intemperately called on Dr. Morton, in a very advanced period of life, to declare, that "it appeared to him that the note does not contain any evidence that the leaves were torn out by Mrs. Macaulay." It was more apparent to the unprejudiced, that the doctor must have singularly lost the use of his memory, when he could not explain his own official note, which, perhaps, at the time

tions" of his life of Lorenzo de' Medici, we discover that Fabroni, whose character scarcely admits of suspicion, appears to have known of the existence of an unpublished letter of Sixtus IV., which involves that pontiff deeply in the assassination projected by the Pazzi; but he carefully suppressed its notice: yet, in his conscience, he could not avoid alluding to such documents, which he concealed by his silence. Mr. Roscoe has ably defended Fabroni, who may have overlooked this decisive evidence of the guilt of the hypocritical pontiff in the mass of manuscripts; a circumstance not likely to have occurred, however, to this laborious historical inquirer. All party feeling is the same active spirit with an opposite direction. We have a remarkable case, where a most interesting historical production has been silently annihilated by the consent of *both parties*. There once existed an important diary of a very extraordinary character, Sir George Saville,

he was compelled to insert. Dr. Morton was not unfriendly to Mrs. Macaulay's political party; he was the Editor of Whitelocke's Diary of his Embassy to the Queen of Sweden, and has, I believe, largely castrated the work. The original lies at the British Museum.

afterwards Marquis of Hallifax. This master-spirit, for such I am inclined to consider the author of the little book of "Maxims and Reflections," with a philosophical indifference, appears to have held in equal contempt all the factions of his times, and, consequently, has often incurred their severe censures. Among other things, the Marquis of Hallifax had noted down the conversations he had had with Charles the Second, and the great and busy characters of the age. Of this curious secret history there existed two copies, and the noble writer imagined that by this means he had carefully secured their existence; yet both copies were destroyed from opposite motives; the one at the instigation of Pope, who was alarmed at finding some of the catholic intrigues of the court developed; and the other at the suggestion of a noble friend, who was equally shocked at discovering that his party, the Revolutionists, had sometimes practised mean and dishonourable deceptions. It is in these legacies of honourable men, of whatever party they may be, that we expect to find truth and sincerity; but thus it happens that the last hope of posterity is frustrated by the artifices, or

the malignity, of these party-passions. Pulteney, afterwards the Earl of Bath, had also prepared memoirs of his times, which he proposed to confide to Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury, to be composed by the bishop; but his lordship's heir, the general, insisted on destroying these authentic documents, of the value of which we have a notion by one of those conversations which the earl was in the habit of indulging with Hooke, whom he at that time appears to have intended for his historian.

The same hostility to manuscripts, as may be easily imagined, has occurred, perhaps more frequently, on the continent. I shall furnish one considerable fact. A French canon, Claude Joly, a bold and learned writer, had finished an ample life of Erasmus, which included a history of the restoration of literature at the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. Colomiés tells us, that the author had read over the works of Erasmus seven times; we have positive evidence that the MS. was finished for the press: the Cardinal De Noailles would examine the work itself; this important history was not only suppressed, but the hope enter-

tained of finding it among the cardinal's papers was never realized.

These are instances of the annihilation of history; but there is a partial suppression, or castration of passages, equally fatal to the cause of truth; a practice too prevalent among the first editors of memoirs. By such deprivations of the text we have lost important truths, while in some cases, by interpolations, we have been loaded with the fictions of a party. Original memoirs, when published, should now be deposited at that great institution consecrated to our national history—the British Museum, to be verified at all times. In Lord Herbert's history of Henry the Eighth, I find, by a manuscript note, that several things were not permitted to be printed, and that the original MS. was supposed to be in Mr. Sheldon's custody, in 1687. Camden told Sir Robert Filmore that he was not suffered to print all his annals of Elizabeth; but he providently sent these expurgated passages to De Thou, who printed them faithfully; and it is remarkable that De Thou himself used the same precaution in the continuation of his own history. We like distant truths, but truths too near us never fail

to alarm ourselves, our connexions, and our party. Milton, in composing his history of England, introduced, in the third book, a very remarkable digression, on the characters of the Long Parliament; a most animated description of a class of political adventurers, with whom modern history has presented many parallels. From tenderness to a party then imagined to be subdued, it was struck out by command, nor do I find it restituted in Kennett's Collection of English histories. This admirable and exquisite delineation has been preserved in a pamphlet printed in 1681, which has fortunately exhibited one of the warmest pictures in design and colouring by a master's hand. One of our most important volumes of secret history, "Whitelocke's Memorials," was published by Arthur, Earl of Anglesea, in 1682, who took considerable liberties with the manuscript; another edition appeared in 1732, which restored the many important passages through which the earl appears to have struck his castrating pen. The restitution of the castrated passages has not much increased the magnitude of this folio volume; for the omissions usually consisted of a

characteristic stroke, or a short critical opinion, which did not harmonize with the private feelings of the Earl of Anglesea. In consequence of the volume not being much enlarged to the eye, and being unaccompanied by a single line of preface to inform us of the value of this more complete edition, the booksellers imagine that there can be no material difference between the two editions, and wonder at the bibliopolical mystery that they can afford to sell the edition of 1682 at ten shillings, and have five guineas for the edition of 1732! Hume, who, I have been told, wrote his history usually on a sofa, with the epicurean indolence of his fine genius, always refers to the old truncated and faithless edition of Whitelocke—so little in his day did the critical history of books enter into the studies of our authors, or such was the carelessness of our historian! There is more philosophy in *editions* than some philosophers are aware of. Perhaps most "Memoirs" have been unfaithfully published, "curtailed of their fair proportions;" and not a few might be noticed which subsequent editors have restored to their original state, by uniting their dislocated limbs. Unquestionably,

Passion has sometimes annihilated manuscripts, and tamely revenged itself on the papers of hated writers! Louis XIV., with his own hands, after the death of Fenelon, burnt all the manuscripts which the Duke of Burgundy had preserved of his preceptor.

As an example of the suppressors and dilapidators of manuscripts, I shall give an extraordinary fact concerning Louis XIV. more in his favour. His character appears, like some other historical personages, equally disguised by adulation and calumny. That monarch was not the Nero which his revocation of the edict of Nantes made him seem to the French protestants. He was far from approving of the violent measures of his catholic clergy. This opinion of that sovereign was, however, carefully suppressed when his "Instructions to the Dauphin" were first published. It is now ascertained that Louis XIV. was for many years equally zealous and industrious; and, among other useful attempts, composed an elaborate "Discours" for the dauphin for his future conduct. The king gave his manuscript to Pelisson to revise; but after the revision, our royal writer frequently inserted ad-

ditional paragraphs. The work first appeared in an anonymous "Recueil d'Opuscules Litteraries, Amsterdam, 1767," which Barbier, in his "Anonymes," tells us, was "rédigé par Pelisson; le tout publié par l'Abbé Olivet." When at length the printed work was collated with the manuscript original, several suppressions of the royal sentiments appeared, and the editors, too catholic, had, with more particular caution, thrown aside what clearly showed Louis XIV. was far from approving of the violences used against the protestants. The following passage was entirely omitted. "It seems to me, my son, that those who employ extreme and violent remedies do not know the nature of the evil, occasioned in part, by heated minds, which, left to themselves, would insensibly be extinguished, rather than rekindle them afresh by the force of contradiction; above all, when the corruption is not confined to a small number, but diffused through all parts of the state; besides, the Reformers said many true things! The best method to have reduced little by little the Huguenots of my kingdom, was not to have pursued them by any direct severity pointed at them."

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu is a remarkable instance of an author nearly lost to the nation; she is only known to posterity by a chance publication, for such were her famous Turkish letters; the manuscript of which her family once purchased with an intention to suppress, but they were frustrated by a transcript. The more recent letters were reluctantly extracted out of the family trunks, and surrendered in exchange for certain family documents which had fallen into the hands of a bookseller. Had it depended on her relatives, the name of Lady Mary had only reached us in the satires of Pope. The greater part of her epistolary correspondence was destroyed by her mother; and what that good and Gothic lady spared, was suppressed by the hereditary austerity of rank, of which her family was too susceptible. The entire correspondence of this admirable writer, and studious woman—for once, in perusing some unpublished letters of Lady Mary, I discovered that "she had been in the habit of reading seven hours a day for many years"—would undoubtedly have exhibited a fine statue, instead of the torso we now possess; and we might have lived with her ladyship, as

we do with Madame de Sevigné. This I have mentioned elsewhere; but I have since discovered that a considerable correspondence of Lady Mary's, for more than twenty years, with the widow of Col. Forrester, who had retired to Rome, has been stifled in the birth. These letters, with other MSS. of Lady Mary's, were given by Mrs. Forrester to Philip Thicknesse, with a discretionary power to publish. They were held as a great acquisition by Thicknesse and his bookseller; but when they had printed off the first thousand sheets, there were parts which they considered might give pain to some of the family. Thicknesse says, "Lady Mary had in many places been uncommonly severe upon her husband, for all her letters were loaded with a scrap or two of poetry at him*". A negotiation took place with an agent of Lord Bute's —after some time Miss Forrester put in her claims for the MSS.—and the whole terminated, as Thicknesse tells us, in her obtaining a pension, and Lord Bute all the MSS.

The late Duke of Bridgewater, I am informed,

* There was one passage he recollected—"Just left my bed a lifeless trunk, and scarce a dreaming head!"

burnt many of the numerous family papers, and bricked up a quantity, which, when opened after his death, were found to have perished. It is said he declared that he did not choose that his ancestors should be traced back to a person of a mean trade, which it seems might possibly have been the case. The loss now cannot be appreciated; but unquestionably, stores of history, and perhaps, of literature, were sacrificed. Milton's manuscript of Comus was published from the Bridgewater collection, for it had escaped the bricking up!

Manuscripts of great interest are frequently suppressed from the shameful indifference of the possessors.

Mr. Mathias, in his Essay on Gray, tells us, that "in addition to the valuable manuscripts of Mr. Gray, there is reason to think that there were some other papers, *folia Sibyllæ*, in the possession of Mr. Mason; but though a very diligent and anxious inquiry has been made after them, they cannot be discovered since his death. There was, however, one fragment, by Mr. Mason's own description of it, of very great value, namely, "The plan of an intended speech in

Latin on his appointment as professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge." Mr. Mason says, "Immediately on his appointment Mr. Gray sketched out an admirable plan for his inauguration speech; in which, after enumerating the preparatory and auxiliary studies requisite, such as ancient history, geography, chronology, *&c.* he descended to the authentic sources of the science, such as public treaties, state-records, private correspondence of ambassadors, *&c.* He also wrote the exordium of this thesis, not, indeed, so correct as to be given by way of fragment, but so spirited in point of sentiment, as leaves it much to be regretted that he did not proceed to its conclusion." This fragment cannot now be found; and after so very interesting a description of its value, and of its importance, it is difficult to conceive how Mr. Mason could prevail upon himself to withhold it. If there be a subject on which more, perhaps, than on any other, it would have been peculiarly desirable to know, and to follow the train of the ideas of Gray, it is that of modern history, in which no man was more intimately, more accurately, or more extensively conversant than our poet. A

sketch or plan from his hand, on the subjects of history, and on those which belonged to it, might have taught succeeding ages how to conduct these important researches with national advantage, and, like some wand of divination, it might have

"Pointed to beds where sovereign gold doth grow*."
DRYDEN.

I suspect that I could point out the place in which these precious "folia Sibyllæ" of Gray's lie interred; it would no doubt be found among other Sibylline leaves of Mason, of which there are two large boxes, which he left to the care of his executors. These gentlemen, as I am informed, are so extremely careful of them, as to have intrepidly resisted the importunity of some lovers of literature, whose curiosity has been aroused by the secreted treasures. It is a misfortune which has frequently attended this sort of bequests of literary men, that they have left their manuscripts, like their household furniture;

* I have seen a transcript, by the favour of a gentleman who sent it to me, of Gray's directions for reading History. It had its merit at a time when our best histories had not been published, but it is entirely superseded by the admirable "Methode" of Lenglet du Fresnoy.

and in several cases we find that many legatees conceive that all manuscripts are either to be burnt, like obsolete receipts, or to be nailed down in a box, that they may not stir a law-suit!

In a manuscript note of the times, I find that Sir Richard Baker, the author of a chronicle, formerly the most popular one, died in the Fleet; and that his son-in-law, who had all his papers, burnt them for waste-paper; and he said, that "he thought Sir Richard's life was among them!" An auto-biography of those days which we should now highly prize.

Among these mutilators of manuscripts we cannot too strongly remonstrate with those who have the care of the works of others, and convert them into a vehicle for their own particular purposes, even when they run directly counter to the knowledge and opinions of the original writer. Hard was the fate of honest Anthony Wood, when Dr. Fell undertook to have his history of Oxford translated into Latin; the translator, a sullen dogged fellow, when he observed that Wood was enraged at seeing the perpetual alterations of his copy made to please Dr. Fell,

delighted to alter it the more; while the greater executioner supervising the printed sheets, by "correcting, altering, or dashing out what he pleased," compelled the writer publicly to disavow his own work! Such I have heard was the case of Bryan Edwards, who composed the first accounts of Mungo Park. Bryan Edwards, whose personal interests were opposed to the abolishment of the slave-trade, would not suffer any passage to stand in which the African traveller had expressed his conviction of its inhumanity Park, among confidential friends, frequently complained that his work did not only not contain his opinions, but was even interpolated with many which he utterly disclaimed!

Suppressed books become as rare as manuscripts. When I was employed in some researches respecting the history of the Mar-prelate faction, that ardent conspiracy against the established Hierarchy, and of which the very name is but imperfectly to be traced in our history, I discovered that the books and manuscripts of the Mar-prelates have been too cautiously suppressed, or too completely destroyed; while those on the

other side have been as carefully preserved. In our national collection, the British Museum, we find a great deal against Mar-prelate, but not Mar-prelate himself.

I have written the history of this conspiracy in the third volume of "Quarrels of Authors."

PARODIES.

A LADY of *bas bleu* celebrity (the term is getting odious, particularly to our *sçavantes*) had two friends, whom she equally admired—an elegant poet and his parodist. She had contrived to prevent their meeting as long as her stratagems lasted, till at length she apologized to the serious bard for inviting him when his mock *umbra* was to be present. Astonished, she perceived that both men of genius felt a mutual esteem for each other's opposite talent; the ridiculed had perceived no malignity in the playfulness of the parody, and even seemed to consider it as a compliment, aware that parodists do not waste their talent on obscure productions; while the ridiculer himself was very sensible that he was the inferior poet. The lady-critic had imagined that PARODY must necessarily be malicious; and in some cases it is said those on whom the parody has been performed, have been of the same opinion.

PARODY strongly resembles mimicry, a prin-

ciple in human nature not so artificial as it appears: Man may be well defined a mimetic animal. The African boy, who amused the whole kafle he journeyed with, by mimicing the gestures and the voice of the auctioneer who had sold him at the slave-market a few days before, could have had no sense of scorn, of superiority, or of malignity; the boy experienced merely the pleasure of repeating attitudes and intonations which had so forcibly excited his interest. The numerous parodies of Hamlet's soliloquy were never made in derision of that solemn monologue, any more than the travesties of Virgil by Scarron and Cotton; their authors were never so gaily mad as that. We have parodies on the Psalms by Luther; Dodsley parodied the book of Chronicles, and the scripture-style was parodied by Franklin in his beautiful story of Abraham; a story he found in Jeremy Taylor, and which Taylor borrowed from the East, for it is preserved in the Persian Sadi. Not one of these writers, however, proposed to ridicule their originals; some ingenuity in the application was all that they intended. The lady-critic alluded to had suffered by a panic, in imagining that a parody was necessarily a

corrosive satire. Had she indeed proceeded one step further, and asserted that PARODIES might be classed among the most malicious inventions in literature, when they are such as Colman and Lloyd made on Gray, in their odes to "Oblivion and Obscurity," her reading possibly might have supplied the materials of the present research.

PARODIES were frequently practised by the ancients, and with them, like ourselves, consisted of a work grafted on another work, but which turned on a different subject by a slight change of the expressions. It might be a sport of fancy, the innocent child of mirth; or a satirical arrow drawn from the quiver of caustic criticism; or it was that malignant art which only studies to make the original of the parody, however beautiful, contemptible and ridiculous. Human nature thus enters into the composition of parodies, and their variable character originates in the purpose of their application.

There is in "the million" a natural taste for farce after tragedy, and they gladly relieve themselves by mitigating the solemn seriousness of the tragic drama; for they find, that it is but "a step from the sublime to the ridiculous,"

The taste for parody will, I fear, always prevail; for whatever tends to ridicule a work of genius, is usually very agreeable to a great number of contemporaries. In the history of PARODIES, some of the learned have noticed a supposititious circumstance, which, however, may have happened, for it is a very natural one. When the rhapsodists, who strolled from town to town to chant different fragments of the poems of Homer, had recited, they were immediately followed by another set of strollers—buffoons, who made the same audience merry by the burlesque turn which they gave to the solemn strains which had just so deeply engaged their attention. It is supposed that we have one of these travesties of the Iliad in one Sotades, who succeeded by only changing the measure of the verses without altering the words, which entirely disguised the Homeric character; fragments of which, scattered in Dionysius Halicarnassensis, I leave to the curiosity of the learned Grecian*. Homer's battle of the

* Henry Stephens appears first to have started this subject of *parody;* his researches have been borrowed by the Abbé Sallier, to whom, in my turn, I am occasionally indebted. His little dissertation is in the French Academy's Memoires, Tome vii. 398.

frogs and mice, a learned critic, the elder Heinsius, asserts, was not written by the poet, but is a parody on the poem. It is evidently as good-humoured an one as any in the "Rejected Addresses." And it was because Homer was the most popular poet, that he was most susceptible of the playful honours of the parodist; unless the prototype is familiar to us, a parody is nothing! Of these parodists of Homer we may regret the loss of one, Timon of Philius, whose parodies were termed Silli, from Silenus being their chief personage; he levelled them at the sophistical philosophers of his age; his invocation is grafted on the opening of the Iliad, to recount the evil-doings of those babblers, whom he compares to the bags in which Æolus deposited all his winds; balloons inflated with empty ideas! We should like to have appropriated some of these *silli*, or parodies of Timon the Sillograph, which, however, seem to have been at times calumnious *. Shenstone's "School Mistress," and some few

* See a specimen in Aulus Gellius, where this parodist reproaches Plato for having given a high price for a book, whence he drew his noble dialogue of the Timæus. Lib. iii. c. 17.

other ludicrous poems, derive much of their merit from parody.

This taste for parodies was very prevalent with the Grecians, and is a species of humour which perhaps has been too rarely practised by the moderns: Cervantes has some passages of this nature in his parodies of the old chivalric romances; Fielding in some parts of his Tom Jones and Joseph Andrews, in his burlesque poetical descriptions; and Swift in his "Battle of Books," and "Tale of a Tub;" but few writers have equalled the delicacy and felicity of Pope's parodies in the "Rape of the Lock." Such parodies give refinement to burlesque.

The ancients made a liberal use of it in their satirical comedy, and sometimes carried it on through an entire work, as in the Menippean satire, Seneca's mock *Eloge* of Claudius, and Lucian in his Dialogues. There are parodies even in Plato; and an anecdotical one recorded of this philosopher shows them in their most simple state. Dissatisfied with his own poetical essays, he threw them into the flames; that is, the sage resolved to sacrifice his verses to the god of fire; and in repeating that line in Homer where Thetis ad-

dresses Vulcan to implore his aid, the application became a parody, although it required no other change than the insertion of the philosopher's name instead of the goddess's *:

" Vulcan, arise! 'tis *Plato* claims thy aid!"

Boileau affords a happy instance of this simple parody. Corneille, in his Cid, makes one of his personages remark,

" Pour grands que soient les rois ils sont ce que nous sommes,
Ils peuvent se tromper comme les autres hommes."

A slight alteration became a fine parody in Boileau's " Chapelain decoiffé,"

" Pour grands que soient les rois ils sont ce que nous sommes,
Ils se trompent *en vers* comme les autres hommes."

We find in Athenæus the name of the inventor of a species of parody which more immediately engages our notice—DRAMATIC PARODIES. It appears this inventor was a satirist, so that the lady-critic, whose opinion we had the honour of

* See Spanheim Les Cæsars de l'Empereur Julien in his " Preuves," Remarque 8. Sallier judiciously observes, " Il peut nous donner une juste idée de cette sorte d'ouvrage, mais nous ne savons pas precisement en quel tems il a été composé;" no more truly than the Iliad itself!

noticing, would be warranted by appealing to its origin to determine the nature of the thing. A dramatic parody, which produced the greatest effect, was "the Gigantomachia," as appears by the only circumstance known of it. Never laughed the Athenians so heartily as at its representation, for the fatal news of the deplorable state to which the affairs of the republic were reduced in Sicily arrived at its first representation—and the Athenians continued laughing to the end! as the modern Athenians, the volatile Parisians, might in their national concern of an OPERA COMIQUE. It was the business of the dramatic parody to turn the solemn tragedy, which the audience had just seen exhibited, into a farcical comedy; the same actors who had appeared in magnificent dresses, now returned on the stage in grotesque habiliments, with odd postures and gestûres, while the story, though the same, was incongruous and ludicrous. The Cyclops of Euripides is probably the only remaining specimen; for this may be considered as a parody of the ninth book of the Odyssey—the adventures of Ulysses in the cave of Polyphemus, where Silenus and a chorus of satyrs are farcically

introduced, to contrast with the grave narrative of Homer, of the shifts and escape of the cunning man "from the one-eyed ogre." The jokes are too coarse for the French taste of Brumoy, who, in his translation, goes on with a critical growl and foolish apology for Euripides having written a farce; Brumoy, like Pistol, is forced to eat his onion, but with a worse grace, swallowing and execrating to the end.

In dramatic composition, Aristophanes is perpetually hooking in parodies of Euripides, whom of all poets he hated, as well as of Æschylus, Sophocles, and other tragic bards. Since that Grecian wit, at length, has found a translator saturated with his genius, and an interpreter as philosophical, the subject of Grecian parody will probably be reflected in a clearer light from his researches.

Dramatic parodies in modern literature were introduced by our vivacious neighbours, and may be said to constitute a class of literary satires peculiar to the French nation. What had occurred in Greece a similar gaiety of national genius inconsciously reproduced. The dramatic parodies in our own literature, as in "the Rehearsal,"

"Tom Thumb," and "the Critic," however exquisite, are confined to particular passages, and are not grafted on a whole original; we have neither naturalized the dramatic parody into a species, nor dedicated to it the honours of a separate theatre.

This peculiar dramatic satire, a burlesque of an entire tragedy, the volatile genius of the Parisians accomplished. Whenever a new tragedy, which still continues the favourite species of drama with the French, attracted the notice of the town, shortly after uprose its parody at the Italian theatre, so that both pieces may have been performed in immediate succession in the same evening. A French tragedy is most susceptible of this sort of ridicule, by applying its declamatory style, its exaggerated sentiments, and its romantic out-of-the-way nature to the common-place incidents and persons of domestic life; out of the stuff of which they made their emperors, their heroes, and their princesses, they cut out a pompous country justice, a hectoring tailor, or an impudent mantua-maker; but it was not merely this travesty of great personages, nor the lofty effusions of one in a lowly station, which

terminated the object of parody ; it was designed for a higher object, that of more obviously exposing the original for any absurdity in its scenes, or in its catastrophe, and dissecting its faulty characters ; in a word, weighing in the critical scales, the nonsense of the poet. It sometimes became a refined instructor for the public, whose discernment is often blinded by party or prejudice. But it was, too, a severe touchstone for genius : Racine, some say, smiled, others say he did not, when he witnessed Harlequin, in the language of Titus to Berenice, declaiming on some ludicrous affair to Columbine ; La Motte was very sore, and Voltaire, and others, shrunk away with a cry—from a parody ! Voltaire was angry when he witnessed his *Mariamne* parodied by *La mauvais Menage ;* or "Bad Housekeeping." The aged, jealous Herod was turned into an old cross country justice ; Varus, bewitched by Mariamne, strutted a dragoon ; and the whole establishment showed it was under very bad management. Fuzelier collected some of these parodies*, and not unskilfully defends their

* Les Parodies du Nouveau Theatre Italien, 4 vol. 1738. Observations sur la Comedie et sur le Genie de Moliere, par Louis Riccoboni. Liv. iv.

nature and their object against the protest of La Motte, whose tragedies had severely suffered from these burlesques. His celebrated domestic tragedy of Inez de Castro, the fable of which turns on a concealed and clandestine marriage, produced one of the happiest parodies in *Agnes de Chaillot.* In the parody, the cause of the mysterious obstinacy of Pierrot the son, in persisting to refuse the hand of the daughter of his mother-in-law Madame *la Baillive,* is thus discovered by her to Monsieur *le Baillif :*

" Mon mari, pour le coup j'ai decouvert l'affaire,
Ne vous étonnez plus qu'à nos desirs contraire,
Pour ma fille, Pierrot, ne montre que mepris:
Violà l'unique objet dont son cœur est epris."
[*Pointing to Agnes de Chaillot.*

The Baillif exclaims,

" Ma servante?"

This single word was the most lively and fatal criticism of the tragic action of Inez de Castro, which, according to the conventional decorum and fastidious code of French criticism, grossly violated the majesty of Melpomene, by giving a motive and an object so totally undignified to

the tragic tale. In the parody there was something ludicrous when the secret came out which explained poor Pierrot's long-concealed perplexities, in the maid-servant bringing forwards a whole legitimate family of her own! La Motte was also galled by a projected parody of his "Machabees"—where the hasty marriage of the young Machabeus, and the sudden conversion of the amorous Antigone, who, for her first penitential act, persuades a youth to marry her, without first deigning to consult her respectable mother, would have produced an excellent scene for the parody. But La Motte prefixed an angry preface to his Inez de Castro; he inveighs against all parodies, which he asserts to be merely a French fashion (we have seen, however, that it was once Grecian,) the offspring of a dangerous spirit of ridicule, and the malicious amusement of superficial minds.—"Were this true," retorts Fuzelier, "we ought to detest parodies; but we maintain, that far from converting virtue into a paradox, and degrading truth by ridicule, PARODY will only strike at what is chimerical and false; it is not a piece of buffoonery so much as a critical exposition. What do we parody but the ab-

surdities of dramatic writers, who frequently make their heroes act against nature, common sense and truth? After all," he ingeniously adds, "it is the public, not we, who are the authors of these PARODIES; for they are usually but the echoes of the pit, and we parodists have only to give a dramatic form to the opinions and observations we hear. Many tragedies," Fuzelier, with admirable truth, observes, "disguise vices into virtues, and PARODIES unmask them." We have had tragedies recently which very much required parodies to expose them, and to shame our inconsiderate audiences, who patronised these monsters of false passions. The rants and bombast of some of these might have produced, with little or no alteration of the inflated originals, "A Modern Rehearsal," or a new "Tragedy for Warm Weather."

Of PARODIES, we may safely approve of their legitimate use, and even indulge their agreeable maliciousness; while we must still dread that extraordinary facility to which the public, or rather human nature, are so prone, as sometimes to laugh at what at another time they would shed tears.

Tragedy is rendered comic or burlesque by altering the *station* and *manners* of the *persons;* and the reverse may occur, of raising what is comic and burlesque into tragedy. On so little depends the sublime or the ridiculous! Beattie says, "In most human characters there are blemishes, moral, intellectual, or corporeal; by exaggerating which, to a certain degree, you may form a comic character; as by raising the virtues, abilities, or external advantages of individuals, you form epic or tragic characters*;" a subject humorously touched on by Lloyd, in the prologue to "the Jealous Wife."

"Quarrels, upbraidings, jealousies, and spleen,
Grow too familiar in the comic scene;
Tinge but the language with heroic chime,
'Tis passion, pathos, character sublime.
What big round words had swell'd the pompous scene,
A king the husband, and the wife a queen."

* Beattie on Poetry and Music, p. 111.

ANECDOTES OF THE FAIRFAX FAMILY.

Will a mind of great capacity be reduced to mediocrity by the ill-choice of a profession?

Parents are interested in the metaphysical discussion, whether there really exists an inherent quality in the human intellect which imparts to the individual an aptitude for one pursuit more than for another. What Lord Shaftesbury calls not innate, but connatural qualities of the human character, were, during the latter part of the last century, entirely rejected; but of late there appears a tendency to return to the notion which is consecrated by antiquity. Experience will often correct modern hypothesists. The term "predisposition" may be objectionable, as are all terms which pretend to describe the occult operations of Nature—and at present we have no other!

Our children pass through the same public education, while they are receiving little or none for their individual dispositions, should they have sufficient strength of character to indicate any.

The great secret of education is to develop the faculties of the individual; for it may happen that his real talent may lie hidden and buried under his education. A profession is usually adventitious, made by chance views, or by family arrangements. Should a choice be submitted to the youth himself, he will often mistake slight and transient tastes for permanent dispositions. A decided character, however, we may often observe, is repugnant to a particular pursuit, delighting in another; talents, languid and vacillating in one profession, we might find vigorous and settled in another; an indifferent lawyer might be an admirable architect! At present all our human bullion is sent to be melted down in an university, to come out, as if thrown into a burning mould, a bright physician, a bright lawyer, a bright divine—in other words, to adapt themselves for a profession, preconcerted by their parents. By this means we may secure a titular profession for our son, but the true genius of the avocation in the *bent of the mind*, as a man of great original powers called it, is too often absent! Instead of finding fit offices for fit men, we are perpetually discovering, on the stage of society,

actors out of character! Our most popular writer has happily described this error.

"A laughing philosopher, the Democritus of our day, once compared human life to a table pierced with a number of holes, each of which has a pin made exactly to fit it, but which pins being stuck in hastily, and without selection, chance leads inevitably to the most awkward mistakes. For how often do we see," the orator pathetically concluded,—"how often, I say, do we see the round man stuck into the three-cornered hole!"

In looking over a manuscript life of Tobie Matthews, archbishop of York in James the First's reign, I found a curious anecdote of his grace's disappointment in the dispositions of his sons. The cause, indeed, is not uncommon, as was confirmed by another great man, to whom the archbishop confessed it. The old Lord Thomas Fairfax one day found the archbishop very melancholy, and inquired the reason of his grace's pensiveness: "My lord," said the archbishop, "I have great reason of sorrow with respect of my sons; one of whom has wit and no grace, another grace but no wit, and the third neither grace nor wit."

"Your case," replied Lord Fairfax, "is not singular. I am also sadly disappointed in my sons: one I sent into the Netherlands to train him up a soldier, and he makes a tolerable country justice, but a mere coward at fighting; my next I sent to Cambridge, and he proves a good lawyer, but a mere dunce at divinity; and my youngest I sent to the inns of court, and he is good at divinity, but nobody at the law." The relater of this anecdote adds, "This I have often heard from the descendant of that honourable family, who yet seems to mince the matter because so immediately related." The eldest son was the Lord Ferdinando Fairfax—and the gunsmith to Thomas Lord Fairfax the son of this Lord Ferdinando, heard the old Lord Thomas call aloud to his grandson, "Tom! Tom! mind thou the battle! Thy father's a good man, but mere coward! All the good I expect is from thee!" It is evident that the old Lord Thomas Fairfax was a military character, and in his earnest desire of continuing a line of heroes, had preconcerted to make his eldest son a military man, who we discover turned out to be admirably fitted for a worshipful justice of the quorum.

This is a lesson for the parent who consults his own inclinations and not those of natural disposition. In the present case the same lord, though disappointed, appears still to have persisted in the same wish of having a great military character in his family: having missed one in his elder son, and settled his other sons in different avocations, the grandfather persevered, and fixed his hopes, and bestowed his encouragements, on his grandson Sir Thomas Fairfax, who makes so distinguished a figure in the civil wars.

The difficulty of discerning the aptitude of a youth for any particular destination in life will, perhaps, even for the most skilful parent, be always hazardous. Many will be inclined, in despair of any thing better, to throw dice with fortune; or adopt the determination of the father who settled his sons by a whimsical analogy which he appears to have formed of their dispositions or aptness for different pursuits. The boys were standing under a hedge in the rain, and a neighbour reported to the father the conversation he had overheard. John wished it would rain books, for he wished to be a preacher;

Bezaleel, wool, to be a clothier, like his father; Samuel, money, to be a merchant; and Edmund, plums, to be a grocer. The father took these wishes as a hint, and we are told, in the life of John Angier the elder son, a puritan minister, that he chose for them these different callings, in which it appears that they settled successfully. "Whatever a young man at first applies himself to is commonly his delight afterwards." This is an important principle discovered by Hartley, but it will not supply the parent with any determinate regulation how to distinguish a transient from a permanent disposition; or how to get at what we may call the connatural qualities of the mind. A particular opportunity afforded me some close observation on the characters and habits of two youths, brothers in blood and affection, and partners in all things, who even to their very dress shared alike; who were never separated from each other; who were taught by the same masters, lived under the same roof, and were accustomed to the same uninterrupted habits; yet had nature created them totally distinct in the qualities of their minds; and similar as their lives had been, their abilities were adapted for

very opposite pursuits : either of them could not have been the other. And I observed how the "predisposition" of the parties was distinctly marked from childhood: the one slow, penetrating, and correct; the other quick, irritable, and fanciful: the one persevering in examination; the other rapid in results: the one unexhausted by labour; the other impatient of whatever did not relate to his own pursuit: the one logical, historical, and critical; the other having acquired nothing, decided on all things by his own sensations. We would confidently consult in the one a great legal character, and in the other an artist of genius. If nature had not secretly placed a bias in their distinct minds, how could two similar beings have been so dissimilar?

A story recorded of Cecco d'Ascoli and of Dante, on the subject of natural and acquired genius, may illustrate the present topic. Cecco maintained that nature was more potent than art, while Dante asserted the contrary. To prove his principle, the great Italian bard referred to his cat, which, by repeated practice, he had taught to hold a candle in its paw while he supped or read. Cecco desired to witness the experiment,

and came not unprepared for his purpose; when Dante's cat was performing its part, Cecco, lifting up the lid of a pot which he had filled with mice, the creature of art instantly showed the weakness of a talent merely acquired, and dropping the candle, flew on the mice with all its instinctive propensity. Dante was himself disconcerted; and it was adjudged that the advocate for the occult principle of native faculties had gained his cause!

To tell stories, however, is not to lay down principles, yet principles may sometimes be concealed in stories *.

* I have arranged many facts, connected with the present subject, in the fifth chapter of what I have written on "The Literary Character" in the third edition, 1822.

MEDICINE AND MORALS.

A stroke of personal ridicule is levelled at Dryden, when Bayes informs us of his preparations for a course of study by a course of medicine! "When I have a grand design," says he, "I ever take physic and let blood; for when you would have pure swiftness of thought, and fiery flights of fancy, you must have a care of the pensive part; in fine, you must purge the belly!" Such was really the practice of the poet, as La Motte, who was a physician, informs us, and in his medical character did not perceive that ridicule in the subject which the wits and most readers unquestionably have enjoyed. The wits here were as cruel against truth as against Dryden; for we must still consider this practice, to use their own words, as "an excellent recipe for writing." Among other philosophers, one of the most famous disputants of antiquity, Carneades, was accustomed to take copious doses of white hellebore, a great aperient, as a prepara-

tion to refute the dogmas of the stoics. Dryden's practice was neither whimsical nor peculiar to the poet; he was of a full habit, and, no doubt, had often found by experience the beneficial effects without being aware of the cause, which is nothing less than the reciprocal influence of mind and body.

This simple fact is, indeed, connected with one of the most important inquiries in the history of man; the laws which regulate the invisible union of the soul with the body: in a word, the inscrutable mystery of our being!—a secret, but an undoubted intercourse, which probably must ever elude our perceptions. The combination of metaphysics with physics has only been productive of the wildest fairy tales among philosophers: with one party the soul seems to pass away in its last puff of air, while man seems to perish in "dust to dust;" the other as successfully gets rid of our bodies altogether, by denying the existence of matter. We are not certain that mind and matter are distinct existences, since the one may be only a modification of the other; however this great mystery be imagined, we shall find with Dr. Gregory, in his lectures "on the duties

and qualifications of a physician," that it forms an equally necessary inquiry in the sciences of *morals* and of *medicine*.

Whether we consider the vulgar distinction of mind and body as an union, or as a modified existence, no philosopher denies that a reciprocal action takes place between our moral and physical condition. Of these sympathies, like many other mysteries of nature, the cause remains occult, while the effects are obvious. This close yet inscrutable association, this concealed correspondence of parts seemingly unconnected, in a word, this reciprocal influence of the mind and the body, has long fixed the attention of medical and metaphysical inquirers; the one having the care of our exterior organization, the other that of the interior. Can we conceive the mysterious inhabitant as forming a part of its own habitation? The tenant and the house are so inseparable, that in striking at any part of the building, you inevitably reach the dweller. If the mind is disordered, we may often look for its seat in some corporeal derangement. Often are our thoughts disturbed by a strange irritability, which we do not even pretend to account for. This state of the body, called the *fidgets*, is a disorder to which

the ladies are particularly liable. A physician of my acquaintance was earnestly entreated by a female patient to give a name to her unknown complaints; this he found no difficulty to do, as he is a sturdy asserter of the materiality of our nature; he declared that her disorder was ATMOSPHERICAL. It was the disorder of her frame under damp weather, which was re-acting on her mind; and physical means, by operating on her body, might be applied to restore her to her half-lost senses. Our imagination is highest when our stomach is not overloaded; in spring than in winter; in solitude than amidst company; and in an obscured light than in the blaze and heat of the noon. In all these cases the body is evidently acted on, and re-acts on the mind. Sometimes our dreams present us with images of our restlessness, till we recollect that the seat of our brain may perhaps lie in our stomach, rather than on the pineal gland of Descartes; and that the most artificial logic to make us somewhat reasonable, may be swallowed with "the blue pill." Our domestic happiness often depends on the state of our biliary and digestive organs, and the little disturbances of conjugal life may be more efficaciously cured by the phy-

sician than by the moralist ; for a sermon misapplied will never act so directly as a sharp medicine. The learned Gaubius, an eminent professor of medicine at Leyden, who called himself " professor of the passions," gives the case of a lady of too inflammable a constitution, whom her husband, unknown to herself, had gradually reduced to a model of decorum, by phlebotomy. Her complexion, indeed, lost the roses, which some, perhaps, had too wantonly admired for the repose of her conjugal physician.

The art of curing moral disorders by corporeal means has not yet been brought into general practice, although it is probable that some quiet sages of medicine have made use of it on some occasions. The Leyden professor we have just alluded to, delivered at the university a discourse " on the management and cure of the disorders of the mind by application to the body." Descartes conjectured, that as the mind seems so dependent on the disposition of the bodily organs, if any means can be found to render men wiser and more ingenious than they have been hitherto, such a method might be sought from the assistance of *medicine*. The sciences of MORALS and of

MEDICINE will therefore be found to have a more intimate connexion than has been suspected. Plato thought that a man must have natural dispositions towards virtue to become virtuous; that it cannot be educated—you cannot make a bad man a good man; which he ascribes to the evil dispositions of the *body*, as well as to a bad education.

There are, unquestionably, constitutional moral disorders; some good-tempered but passionate persons have acknowledged, that they cannot avoid those temporary fits to which they are liable, and which, they say, they always suffered "from a child." If they arise from too great a fulness of blood, is it not cruel to upbraid rather than to cure them, which might easily be done by taking away their redundant humours, and thus quieting the most passionate man alive? A moral patient, who allows his brain to be disordered by the fumes of liquor, instead of being suffered to be a ridiculous being, might have opiates prescribed; for in laying him asleep as soon as possible, you remove the cause of his sudden madness. There are crimes for which men are hanged, but of which they might easily have been cured

by physical means. Persons out of their senses with love, by throwing themselves into a river, and being dragged out nearly lifeless, have recovered their senses, and lost their bewildering passion. Submersion was discovered to be a cure for some mental disorders, by altering the state of the body, as Van Helmont notices, "was happily practised in England." With the circumstance this sage of chemistry alludes to I am unacquainted; but this extraordinary practice was certainly known to the Italians; for in one of the tales of Poggio we find a mad doctor of Milan, who was celebrated for curing lunatics and demoniacs in a certain time. His practice consisted in placing them in a great high-walled court-yard, in the midst of which there was a deep well full of water, cold as ice. When a demoniac was brought to this physician, he had the patient bound to a pillar in the well, till the water ascended to the knees, or higher, and even to the neck, as he deemed their malady required. In their bodily pain they appear to have forgot their melancholy; thus by the terrors of the repetition of cold water, a man appears to have been frightened into his senses! A physician has informed

me of a remarkable case: a lady with a disordered mind, resolved on death, and swallowed much more than half a pint of laudanum; she closed her curtains in the evening, took a farewell of her attendants, and flattered herself she should never awaken from her sleep. In the morning, however, notwithstanding this incredible dose, she awoke in the agonies of death. By the usual means she was enabled to get rid of the poison she had so largely taken, and not only recovered her life, but, what is more extraordinary, her perfect senses! The physician conjectures that it was the influence of her disordered mind over her body which prevented this vast quantity of laudanum from its usual action by terminating in death.

Moral vices or infirmities, which originate in the state of the body, may be cured by topical applications. Precepts and ethics in such cases, if they seem to produce a momentary cure, have only mowed the weeds, whose roots lie in the soil. It is only by changing the soil itself that we can eradicate these evils. The senses are five porches for the physician to enter into the mind, to keep it in repair. By altering the state of

the body, we are changing that of the mind, whenever the defects of the mind depend on those of the organization. The mind, or soul, however distinct its being from the body, is disturbed or excited, independent of its volition, by the mechanical impulses of the body. A man becomes stupified when the circulation of the blood is impeded in the *viscera;* he acts more from instinct than reflection ; the nervous fibres are too relaxed or too tense, and he finds a difficulty in moving them ; if you heighten his sensations, you awaken new ideas in this stupid being ; and as we cure the stupid by increasing his sensibility, we may believe that a more vivacious fancy may be promised to those who possess one, when the mind and the body play together in one harmonious accord. Prescribe the bath, frictions, and fomentations, and though it seems a round-about way, you get at the brains by his feet. A literary man, from long sedentary habits, could not overcome his fits of melancholy, till his physician doubled his daily quantity of wine ; and the learned Henry Stephens, after a severe ague, had such a disgust of books, the most beloved objects of his whole life, that the very thought of them excited terror for

a considerable time. It is evident that the state of the body often indicates that of the mind. Insanity itself often results from some disorder in the human machine. "What is this MIND, of which men appear so vain?" exclaims Flechier. "If considered according to its nature, it is a fire which sickness and an accident most sensibly puts out; it is a delicate temperament, which soon grows disordered; a happy conformation of organs, which wear out; a combination and a certain motion of the spirits, which exhaust themselves; it is the most lively and the most subtile part of the soul, which seems to grow old with the BODY."

It is not wonderful that some have attributed such virtues to their system of *diet*, if it has been found productive of certain effects on the human body. Cornaro perhaps imagined more than he experienced; but Apollonius Tyaneus, when he had the credit of holding an intercourse with the devil, by his presumed gift of prophecy, defended himself from the accusation by attributing his clear and prescient views of things to the light aliments he lived on, never indulging in a variety of food. "This mode of life has produced such

a perspicuity in my ideas, that I see as in a glass things past and future." We may, therefore. agree with Bayes, that "for a sonnet to Amanda, and the like, stewed prunes only" might be sufficient; but for "a grand design," nothing less than a more formal and formidable dose.

Camus, a French physician, who combined literature with science, the author of "Abdeker, or the Art of Cosmetics," which he discovered in exercise and temperance, produced another fanciful work, written in 1753, "La Medecine de l'Esprit." His conjectural cases are at least as numerous as his more positive facts; for he is not wanting in imagination. He assures us, that having reflected on the physical causes, which, by differently modifying the body, varied also the dispositions of the mind, he was convinced that by employing these different causes, or by imi tating their powers by art, we might by means purely mechanical affect the human mind, and correct the infirmities of the understanding and the will. He considered this principle only as the aurora of a brighter day. The great difficulty to overcome was to find out a method to root out the defects, or the diseases of the soul, in the same

manner as physicians cure a fluxion from the lungs, a dysentery, a dropsy, and all other infirmities, which seem only to attack the body. This indeed, he says, is enlarging the domain of medicine, by showing how the functions of the intellect and the springs of volition are mechanical. The movements and passions of the soul, formerly restricted to abstract reasonings, are by this system reduced to simple ideas. Insisting that material causes force the soul and body to act together, the defects of the intellectual operations depend on those of the organization, which may be altered or destroyed by physical causes; and he properly adds, that we are to consider that the soul is material, while existing in matter, because it is operated on by matter. Such is the theory of "La Medecine de l'Esprit," which, though physicians will never quote, may perhaps contain some facts worth their attention.

Camus's two little volumes seem to have been preceded by a medical discourse delivered in the academy of Dijon in 1748, where the moralist compares the infirmities and vices of the mind to parallel diseases of the body. We may safely consider some infirmities and passions of the mind

as diseases, and could they be treated as we do the bodily ones, to which they bear an affinity, this would be the great triumph of "morals and medicine." The passion of avarice resembles the thirst of dropsical patients; that of envy is a slow-wasting fever; love is often frenzy, and capricious and sudden restlessness, epileptic fits. There are moral disorders which at times spread like epidemical maladies through towns, and countries and even nations. There are hereditary vices and infirmities transmitted from the parent's mind as there are unquestionably such diseases of the body: the son of a father of a hot and irritable temperament inherits the same quickness and warmth; a daughter is often a counterpart of her mother. Morality, could it be treated medicinally, would require its prescriptions, as all diseases have their specific remedies; the great secret is perhaps discovered by Camus —that of *operating on the mind by means of the body*.

A recent writer seems to have been struck by these curious analogies. Mr. Haslam, in his work on "Sound Mind," says, p. 90, "There seems to be a considerable similarity between the morbid

state of the instruments of voluntary motion (that is, the *body*,) and certain affections of the mental powers, (that is, the *mind.*) Thus, *paralysis* has its counterpart in *the defects of recollection*, where the utmost endeavour to remember is ineffectually exerted. *Tremor* may be compared with *incapability of fixing the attention*, and this *involuntary state of muscles* ordinarily subjected to the will, also finds a parallel where the mind loses its influence in the train of thought, and becomes subject to spontaneous intrusions; as may be exemplified in *reveries*, *dreaming*, and some species of *madness.*"

Thus one philosopher discovers the analogies of the mind with the body, and another of the body with the mind. Can we now hesitate to believe that such analogies exist—and advancing one step further, trace in this reciprocal influence that a part of the soul is the body, as the body becomes a part of the soul? The most important truth remains undivulged, and ever will in this mental pharmacy; but none is more clear than that which led to the view of this subject, that in this mutual intercourse of body and mind the superior is often governed by the inferior; others

think the mind is more wilfully outrageous than the body. Plutarch, in his essays, has a familiar illustration, which he borrows from some philosopher more ancient than himself: "Should the Body sue the Mind before a court of judicature for damages, it would be found that the Mind would prove to have been a ruinous tenant to its landlord." The sage of Cheronæa did not foresee the hint of Descartes and the discovery of Camus, that by medicine we may alleviate or remove the diseases of the mind; a practice which indeed has not yet been pursued by physicians, though the moralists have been often struck by the close analogies of the MIND with the BODY! A work by the learned Dom Pernetty, *La connoissance de l'homme moral par celle de l'homme physique*, we are told is more fortunate in its title than its execution; probably it is one of the many attempts to develop this imperfect and obscured truth, which hereafter may become more obvious and be universally comprehended.

PSALM-SINGING.

The history of Psalm-singing is a portion of the history of the Reformation; of that great religious revolution which separated for ever, into two unequal divisions, the great establishment of Christianity. It has not, perhaps, been remarked, that Psalm-singing, or metrical Psalms, degenerated into those scandalous compositions which, under the abused title of *hymns*, are now used by some sects*. These are evidently the last disorders of that system of Psalm-singing which made some religious persons early oppose its practice. Even Sternhold and Hopkins, our first Psalm-enditors, says honest Fuller, "found their work afterwards met with some frowns in the faces of great clergymen." To this day these opinions are not adjusted. Archbishop Secker observes, that though the first christians (from this passage in James v. 13, "Is any merry?

* It would be polluting these pages with ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy, were I to give specimens of some hymns of the Moravians and the Methodists, and some of the still lower sects.

let him sing Psalms!") made singing a constant part of their worship, and the whole congregation joined in it; yet afterwards the singers by profession, who had been *prudently appointed to lead and direct them*, by degrees USURPED the whole performance. But at the Reformation *the people were restored to their* RIGHTS!" This revolutionary style is singular: one might infer by the expression of *the people being restored to their rights*, that a mixed assembly roaring out confused tunes, nasal, guttural, and sibilant, was a more orderly government of Psalmody than when the executive power was consigned to the voices of those whom the archbishop had justly described as having been first *prudently appointed to lead and direct them;* and who, by their subsequent proceedings, evidently discovered, what they might have safely conjectured, that such an universal suffrage, where every man was to have a voice, must necessarily end in clatter and chaos* !

* Mr. Hamper, of Birmingham, has obligingly supplied me with a rare tract, entitled "Singing of Psalmes, vindicated from the charge of Novelty," in answer to Dr. Russell, Mr. Marlow, &c., 1698. It furnishes numerous au-

Thomas Warton, however, regards the metrical Psalms of Sternhold as a puritanic invention, and asserts, that notwithstanding it is said in their title-page that they are "set forth and *allowed* to be sung in all churches," they were never admitted by lawful authority. They were first introduced by the Puritans, and afterwards continued by connivance. As a true poetical antiquary, Thomas Warton condemns any *modernisation* of the venerable text of the old Sternhold and Hopkins, which, by changing obsolete for familiar words, destroys the texture of the original style; and many stanzas, already too naked and weak, like a plain old Gothic edifice stripped of its few signatures of antiquity, have lost that little and almost only strength and support which they derived from ancient phrases. "Such alterations, even if executed with prudence and judgment, only corrupt what they endeavour to explain; and exhibit a motley performance, belonging to no character of writing, and which contains more im-

thorities to shew that it was practised by the primitive Christians on almost every occasion. I shall shortly quote a remarkable passage.

proprieties than those which it professes to remove." This forcible criticism is worthy of our poetical antiquary; the same feeling was experienced by Pasquier, when Marot, in his *Refaccimento* of the Roman de la Rose, left some of the obsolete phrases, while he got rid of others; *cette bigarrure de langage vieux et moderne*, was with him writing no language at all. The same circumstance occurred abroad when they resolved to retouch and modernise the old French metrical version of the Psalms, which we are about to notice. It produced the same controversy and the same dissatisfaction. The church of Geneva adopted an *improved* version, but the charm of the old one was wanting.

To trace the history of modern metrical Psalmody, we must have recourse to Bayle, who, as a mere literary historian, has accidentally preserved it. The inventor was a celebrated French poet; and the invention, though perhaps in its very origin inclining towards the abuse to which it was afterwards carried, was unexpectedly adopted by the austere Calvin, and introduced into the Geneva discipline. It is indeed strange, that while he was stripping religion not merely

of its pageantry, but even of its decent ceremonies, that this levelling reformer should have introduced this taste for *singing* Psalms in opposition to *reading* Psalms. "On a parallel principle," says Thomas Warton, "and if any artificial aids to devotion were to be allowed, he might at least have retained the use of pictures in the church." But it was decreed that statues should be mutilated of "their fair proportions," and painted glass be dashed into pieces, while the congregation were to sing! Calvin sought for proselytes among "the rabble of a republic, who can have no relish for the more elegant externals." But to have made men sing in concert, in the streets, or at their work, and merry or sad, on all occasions to tickle the ear with rhymes and touch the heart with emotion, was betraying no deficient knowledge of human nature.

It seems, however, that this project was adopted accidentally, and was certainly promoted by the fine natural genius of Clement Marot, the favoured bard of Francis the First, that "Prince of Poets, and that Poet of Princes," as he was quaintly but expressively dignified by his contemporaries. Marot is still an inimitable and

true poet, for he has written in a manner of his own with such marked felicity, that he has left his name to a style of poetry called *Marotique.* The original La Fontaine is his imitator. Marot delighted in the very forms of poetry, as well as its subjects and its manner. His life, indeed, took more shapes, and indulged in more poetical licenses, than even his poetry: licentious in morals; often in prison, or at court, or in the army, or a fugitive, he has left in his numerous little poems many a curious record of his variegated existence. He was indeed very far from being devout, when his friend the learned Vatable, the Hebrew professor, probably to reclaim a perpetual sinner from profane rhimes, as Marot was suspected of heresy, confession and meagre days being his abhorrence! suggested the new project of translating the Psalms into *French verse*, and no doubt assisted the bard; for they are said to be "traduitz en rithme Français selon la verité Hebraique." The famous Theodore Beza was also his friend and prompter, and afterwards his continuator. Marot published fifty-two Psalms, written in a variety of measures, with the same style he had done his ballads and ron-

deaux. He dedicated to the king of France, comparing him with the royal Hebrew, and with a French compliment!

> Dieu le *donna* aux peuples Hebraiques
> Dieu te *devoit*, ce pense-je, aux Galliques.

He insinuates that in his version he had received assistance

> " ———————— par les divins esprits
> Qui ont sous toy Hebrieu langage apris,
> Nous sont jettés les Pseaumes en lumiere
> Clairs, et au sens de la forme premiere."

This royal dedication is more solemn than usual; yet Marot, who was never grave but in prison, soon recovered from this dedication to the king, for on turning the leaf we find another, " Aux Dames de France!" Warton says of Marot, that " He seems anxious to deprecate the raillery which the new tone of his versification was likely to incur, and is embarrassed to find an apology for turning saint." His embarrassments, however terminate in a highly poetical fancy. When will the golden age be restored, exclaims this lady's Psalmist,

> " Quand n'aurons plus de cours ne lieu
> Les chansons de ce petit Dieu

A qui les peintres font des aisles ?
O vous dames et demoiselles
Que Dieu fait pour estre son temple
Et faites, sous mauvais exemple
Retentir et chambres et sales,
De chansons mondaines ou sales," *&c.*

Knowing, continues the poet, that songs that are silent about love can never please you, here are some composed by love itself; all here is love, but more than mortal! Sing these at all times,

Et les convertir et muer
Faisant vos levres remuer,
Et vos doigts sur les espinettes
Pour dire saintes chansonettes.

Marot then breaks forth with that enthusiasm, which perhaps at first conveyed to the sullen fancy of the austere Calvin the project he so successfully adopted, and whose influence we are still witnessing.

O bien heureux qui voir pourra
Fleurir le temps, que l'on orra
Le laboureur à sa charrue
Le charretier parmy la rue,
Et l'artisan en sa boutique
Avecques un PSEAUME ou cantique,
En son labeur se soulager;
Heureux qui orra le berger

Et la bergere en bois estans
Faire que rochers et estangs
Apres eux chantent la hauteur
Du saint nom de leurs Createur.
  Commencez, dames, commencez
Le siecle doré ! avancez !
En chantant d'un cueur debonnaire.
Dedans ce saint cancionnaire.

  Thrice happy they, who may behold,
And listen, in that age of gold !
As by the plough the labourer strays,
And carman mid the public ways,
And tradesman in his shop shall swell
Their voice in Psalm or Canticle,
Singing to solace toil ; again,
From woods shall come a sweeter strain !
Shepherd and shepherdess shall vie
In many a tender Psalmody ;
And the Creator's name prolong
As rock and stream return their song !
  Begin then, ladies fair ! begin
The age renew'd that knows no sin !
And with light heart, that wants no wing,
Sing ! from this holy song-book, sing*!

* In the curious tract already referred to, the following quotation is remarkable ; the scene the fancy of Marot pictured to him, had *anciently occurred.* St. Jerome in his seventeenth Epistle to Marcellus thus describes it : "In christian villages little else is to be heard but Psalms ; for which way soever you turn yourself, either you have the

This "holy song-book" for the harpsichord or the voice was a gay novelty, and no book was ever more eagerly received by all classes than Marot's "Psalms." In the fervour of that day, they sold faster than the printers could take them off their presses; but as they were understood to be *songs*, and yet were not accompanied by music, every one set them to favourite tunes, commonly those of popular ballads. Each of the royal family, and every nobleman, chose a psalm or a song, which expressed his own personal feelings, adapted to his own tune. The Dauphin, afterwards Henry II., a great hunter, when he went to the chase was singing *Ainsi qu'on vit le cerf bruyre*. "Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks." There is a curious portrait of the mistress of Henry, the famous Diane de Poictiers, recently published, on which is inscribed this *verse of the Psalm*. On a portrait which exhibits Diane in an attitude rather unsuitable to so solemn an application, no reason could be found to account for this discordance; perhaps the painter,

Ploughman at his plough singing *Hallelujahs*, the weary Brewer refreshing himself with a *psalm*, or the Vine-dresser chanting forth somewhat of *David's*."

or the lady herself, chose to adopt the favourite Psalm of her royal lover, proudly to designate the object of her love, besides its double allusion to her name. Diane, however, in the first stage of their mutual attachment, took *Du fond de ma pensée*, or, "From the depth of my heart." The Queen's favourite was,

Ne vueilles pas, o sire,
Me reprendre en ton ire,

that is, "Rebuke me not in thy indignation," which she sung to a fashionable jig. Antony, king of Navarre, sung, *Revenge moy prens la querelle*, or, "Stand up, O Lord, to revenge my quarrel," to the air of a dance of Poitou*. We may conceive the ardour with which this novelty was received, for Francis sent to Charles the Fifth Marot's collection, who both by promises and presents encouraged the French bard to proceed with his version, and entreating Marot to send him as soon as possible *Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus*, because it was his favourite Psalm.

* As Warton has partly drawn from the same source, I have adopted his own words whenever I could. It is not easy to write after Thomas Warton whenever he is pleased with his subject.

And the Spanish as well as French composers hastened to set the Psalms of Marot to music. The fashion lasted, for Henry the Second set one to an air of his own composing. Catharine de Medicis had her Psalm, and it seems that every one at court adopted some particular Psalm for themselves, which they often played on lutes and guitars, *&c.* Singing Psalms in verse was then one of the chief ingredients in the happiness of social life.

The universal reception of Marot's Psalms induced Theodore Beza to conclude the collection, and ten thousand copies were immediately dispersed. But these had the advantage of being set to music, for we are told, they were "admirably fitted to the violin and other musical instruments." And who was the man who had thus adroitly taken hold of the public feeling to give it this strong direction? It was the solitary Thaumaturgus, the ascetic Calvin, who, from the depth of his closet at Geneva, had engaged the finest musical composers, who were, no doubt, warmed by the zeal of propagating his faith, to form these simple and beautiful airs to assist the Psalm-singers. At first this was not discovered,

and Catholics, as well as Huguenots, were solacing themselves on all occasions with this new music. But when Calvin appointed these Psalms, as set to music, to be sung at his meetings, and Marot's formed an appendix to the Catechism of Geneva, this put an end to all Psalm-singing for the poor Catholics! Marot himself was forced to fly to Geneva from the fulminations of the Sorbonne, and Psalm-singing became an open declaration of what the French called "Lutheranism," when it became with the reformed a regular part of their religious discipline. The Cardinal of Lorraine succeeded in persuading the lovely patroness of the "holy Song-book," Diana de Poictiers, who at first was a Psalm-singer and an heretical reader of the Bible, to discountenance this new fashion. He began by finding fault with the Psalms of David, and revived the amatory elegancies of Horace: at that moment even the reading of the Bible was symptomatic of Lutheranism; Diana, who had given way to these novelties, would have a French Bible, because the queen, Catharine de Medicis, had one, and the Cardinal finding a bible on her table, immediately crossed himself, beat his breast, and

otherwise so well acted his part, that " having thrown the Bible down and condemned it, he remonstrated with the fair penitent, that it was a kind of reading not adapted for her sex, containing dangerous matters ; if she was uneasy in her mind she should hear two masses instead of one, and rest content with her Pater-nosters and her Primer, which were not only devotional, but ornamented with a variety of elegant forms from the most exquisite pencils of France." Such is the story drawn from a curious letter, written by a Huguenot, and a former friend of Catharine de Medicis, and by which we may infer that the reformed religion was making considerable progress in the French court,—had the Cardinal of Lorraine not interfered by persuading the mistress, and she the king, and the king his queen, at once to give up Psalm-singing and reading the Bible !

" This infectious frenzy of Psalm-singing," as Warton describes it, under the Calvinistic preachers had rapidly propagated itself through Germany as well as France. It was admirably calculated to kindle the flame of Fanaticism, and frequently served as the trumpet to rebellion. These energetic hymns of Geneva excited and

supported a variety of popular insurrections in the most flourishing cities of the Low Countries, and what our poetical antiquary could never forgive, "fomented the fury which defaced many of the most beautiful and venerable churches of Flanders."

At length it reached our island at that critical moment when it had first embraced the Reformation; and here its domestic history was parallel with its foreign, except, perhaps, in the splendour of its success. Sternhold, an enthusiast for the reformation, was much offended, says Warton, at the lascivious ballads which prevailed among the courtiers, and with a laudable design to check these indecencies, he undertook to be our Marot —without his genius; "thinking thereby," says our cynical literary historian, Antony Wood, "that the courtiers would sing them instead of their sonnets, *but did not*, only some few excepted." They were practised by the puritans in the reign of Elizabeth; for Shakespeare notices the puritan of his day "singing Psalms to hornpipes *," and more particularly during the pro-

* My friend, Mr. Douce, imagines, that this alludes to a common practice at that time among the Puritans of *burlesquing the plain chant* of the Papists, by adapting vulgar

tectorate of Cromwell, on the same plan of accommodating them to popular tunes and jigs, which one of them said "were too good for the devil." Psalms were now sung at Lord Mayors' dinners and city feasts; soldiers sang them on their march and at parade; and few houses, which had windows fronting the streets, but had their evening psalms; for a story has come down to us, to record that the hypocritical brotherhood did not always care to sing unless they were heard!

and ludicrous music to psalms and pious compositions. *Illust. of Shakespeare*, I. 355. Mr. Douce does not recollect his authority. My idea differs. May we not conjecture that the intention was the same which induced Sternhold to versify the Psalms, to be sung instead of lascivious ballads; and the most popular tunes came afterwards to be adopted, that the singer might practise his favourite one, as we find it occurred in France.

ON THE RIDICULOUS TITLES ASSUMED BY THE ITALIAN ACADEMIES.

The Italians are a fanciful people, who have often mixed a grain or two of pleasantry and even of folly with their wisdom. This fanciful character betrays itself in their architecture, in their poetry, in their extemporary comedy, and their *Improvisatori;* but an instance not yet accounted for of this national levity, appears in those denominations of exquisite absurdity given by themselves to their Academies! I have in vain inquired for any assignable reason why the most ingenious men, and grave and illustrious personages, cardinals and princes, as well as poets, scholars, and artists, in every literary city, should voluntarily choose to burlesque themselves and their serious occupations, by affecting mysterious or ludicrous titles, as if it were carnival-time, and they had to support masquerade characters, and accepting such titles as we find in the cant style of our own vulgar clubs, the Society of "Odd Fellows," and of "Eccentrics!" A principle so whimsical but

systematic, must surely have originated in some circumstance not hitherto detected.

A literary friend, recently in an Italian city, exhausted by the *sirocco*, entered a house whose open door and circular seats appeared to offer to passengers a refreshing *sorbetto;* he discovered, however, that he had got into "the Academy of the Cameleons," where they met to delight their brothers, and any "spirito gentil" they could nail to a recitation. An invitation to join the academicians alarmed him, for with some impatient prejudice against these little creatures, vocal with *prose e rime*, and usually with odes and sonnets begged for, or purloined for the occasion, he waived all further curiosity and courtesy, and has returned home without any information how these "Cameleons" looked, when changing their colours in an "*accademia*."

Such literary institutions, prevalent in Italy, are the spurious remains of those numerous academies which simultaneously started up in that country about the sixteenth century. They assumed the most ridiculous denominations, and a great number is registered by Quadrio and Tiraboschi. Whatever was their design, one

cannot fairly reproach them, as Mencken, in his "Charlatanaria Eruditorum," seems to have thought, for pompous quackery; neither can we attribute to their modesty their choice of senseless titles, for to have degraded their own exalted pursuits was but folly! Literary history affords no parallel to this national absurdity of the refined Italians. Who could have suspected that the most eminent scholars, and men of genius, were associates of the *Oziosi*, the *Fantastici*, the *Insensati?* Why should Genoa boast of her "Sleepy," Viterbo of her "Obstinates," Sienna of her "Insipids," her "Blockheads," and her "Thunder-struck;" and Naples of her "Furiosi;" while Macerata exults in her "Madmen chained?" Both Quadrio and Tiraboschi cannot deny that these fantastical titles have occasioned these Italian academies to appear very ridiculous to the *oltramontani*; but these valuable historians are no philosophical thinkers. They apologize for this bad taste, by describing the ardour which was kindled throughout Italy at the restoration of letters and the fine arts, so that every one, and even every man of genius, were eager to enroll their names in these academies, and prided

themselves in bearing their emblems, that is, the distinctive arms each academy had chosen. But why did they mystify themselves?

Folly, once become national, is a vigorous plant, which sheds abundant seed. The consequence of having adopted ridiculous titles for these academies, suggested to them many other characteristic fopperies. At Florence every brother of the "Umidi" assumed the name of something aquatic, or any quality pertaining to humidity. One was called "the Frozen," another "the Damp;" one was "the Pike," another "the Swan;" and Grazzini, the celebrated novelist, is known better by the cognomen of *La Lasca*, "the Roach," by which he whimsically designates himself among the "Humids." I find among the *Insensati*, one man of learning taking the name of Stordito *Insensato*, another Tenebroso *Insensato*. The famous Florentine academy of *La Crusca*, amidst their grave labours to sift and purify their language, threw themselves headlong into this vortex of folly. Their title, the academy of "Bran," was a conceit to indicate their art of sifting; but it required an Italian prodigality of conceit to have induced these

grave scholars to exhibit themselves in the burlesque scenery of a pantomimical academy, for their furniture consists of a mill and a bake-house; a pulpit for the orator is a hopper, while the learned director sits on a mill-stone; the other seats have the forms of a miller's dossers, or great panniers, and the backs consist of the long shovels used in ovens. The table is a baker's kneading-trough, and the academician who reads has half his body thrust out of a great bolting sack, with I know not what else for their ink-stands and portfolios. But the most celebrated of these academies is that "degli Arcadia" at Rome, who are still carrying on their pretensions much higher. Whoever aspires to be aggregated to these Arcadian shepherds receives a pastoral name and a title, but not the deeds, of a farm, picked out of a map of the ancient Arcadia or its environs; for Arcadia itself soon became too small a possession for these partitioners of moonshine. Their laws, modelled by the twelve tables of the ancient Romans; their language in the venerable majesty of their renowned ancestors; and this erudite democracy dating by the Grecian Olympiads, which Crescembini, their first custode,

or guardian, most painfully adjusted to the vulgar era, were designed that the sacred erudition of antiquity might for ever be present among these shepherds*. Goldoni, in his Memoirs, has given an amusing account of these honours. He says "he was presented with two diplomas; the one was my charter of aggregation to the *Arcadi* of Rome, under the name of *Polisseno*, the other gave me the investiture of the *Phlegean* fields. I was on this saluted by the whole assembly in chorus, under the name of *Polisseno Phlegeio*, and embraced by them as a fellow shepherd and brother. The *Arcadians* are very rich, as you may perceive, my dear reader: we possess estates in Greece; we water them with our labours for the sake of reaping laurels, and the Turks sow them with grain, and plant them with vines, and laugh at both our titles and our songs." When Fontenelle became an Arcadian, they baptized him *Il Pastor Pigrasto*, that is, "amiable Fountain!" allusive to his name and his delightful style; and magnificently presented him with the entire Isle of Delos! The late Joseph

* Crescembini, at the close of "La bellezza della Volgar Poesia." Roma, 1700.

Walker, an enthusiast for Italian literature, dedicated his "Memoir on Italian Tragedy" to the Countess Spencer; not inscribing it with his christian but his heathen name, and the title of his Arcadian estate, *Eubante Tirinzio!* Plain Joseph Walker, in his masquerade dress, with his Arcadian signet of Pan's reeds dangling in his title-page, was performing a character to which however well adapted, not being understood, he got stared at for his affectation! We have lately heard of some licentious revellings of these Arcadians, in receiving a man of genius from our own country, who, himself composing Italian *Rime*, had "conceit" enough to become a shepherd*! Yet let us inquire before we criticise.

Even this ridiculous society of the Arcadians became a memorable literary institution; and Tiraboschi has shown how it successfully arrested the bad taste which was then prevailing throughout Italy, recalling its muses to purer sources;

* History of the Middle Ages, ii. 584. See, also, Mr. Rose's Letters from the North of Italy, vol. i. 204. Mr. Hallam has observed, that "such an institution as the society *degli Arcadi* could at no time have endured public ridicule in England for a fortnight."

while the lives of many of its shepherds have furnished an interesting volume of literary history under the title of "The illustrious Arcadians." Crescembini, and its founders, had formed the most elevated conceptions of the society at its origin; but poetical vaticinators are prophets only while we read their verses—we must not look for that dry matter of fact—the event predicted!

Il vostro seme eterno
Occuperà la terra, ed i confini
D'Arcadia oltrapassando,
Di non più visti gloriosi germi
L'aureo feconderà lito del Gange
E de' Cimmeri l'infeconde arene.

Mr. Mathias has recently with warmth defended the original *Arcadia;* and the assumed character of its members, which has been condemned as betraying their affectation, he attributes to their modesty. "Before the critics of the Arcadia (the *pastori*, as they modestly styled themselves) with Crescembini for their conductor, and with the *Adorato Albano* for their patron (Clement XI.), all that was depraved in language, and in sentiment, fled and disappeared."

The strange taste for giving fantastical denominations to literary institutions grew into a custom though, probably, no one knew how. The founders were always persons of rank or learning, yet still accident or caprice created the mystifying title, and invented those appropriate emblems, which still added to the folly. The Arcadian society derived its title from a spontaneous conceit. This assembly first held its meetings, on summer evenings, in a meadow on the banks of the Tiber; for the fine climate of Italy promotes such assemblies in the open air. In the recital of an eclogue, an enthusiast, amidst all he was hearing and all he was seeing, exclaimed, "I seem at this moment to be in the Arcadia of ancient Greece, listening to the pure and simple strains of its shepherds." Enthusiasm is contagious amidst susceptible Italians, and this name, by inspiration and by acclamation, was conferred on the society! Even more recently at Florence the *accademia* called the *Colombaria*, or the "Pigeon-house," proves with what levity the Italians name a literary society. The founder was the Cavallero Pazzi, a gentleman, who, like Morose, abhorring noise, chose for his study a

garret in his palazzo; it was, indeed, one of the old turrets which had not yet fallen in: there he fixed his library, and there he assembled the most ingenious Florentines to discuss obscure points, and to reveal their own contributions in this secret retreat of silence and philosophy. To get to this cabinet it was necessary to climb a very steep and very narrow staircase, which occasioned some facetious wit to observe, that these literati were so many pigeons who flew every evening to their dove-cot. The Cavallero Pazzi, to indulge this humour, invited them to a dinner entirely composed of their little brothers, in all the varieties of cookery; the members, after a hearty laugh, assumed the title of the *Colombaria*, invented a device consisting of the top of a turret, with several pigeons flying about it, bearing an epigraph from Dante, *Quanto veder si pùo*, by which they expressed their design not to apply themselves to any single object. Such facts sufficiently prove that some of the absurd or facetious denominations of these literary societies originated in accidental circumstances, or in mere pleasantry; but this will not account for the origin of those mystifying titles we have noticed; for

when grave men call themselves dolts or lunatics, unless they are really so, they must have some reason for laughing at themselves.

To attempt to develop this curious but obscure singularity in literary history, we must go farther back among the first beginnings of these institutions. How were they looked on by the governments in which they first appeared? These academies might, perhaps, form a chapter in the history of secret societies, one not yet written, but of which many curious materials lie scattered in history. It is certain that such literary societies, in their first origins, have always excited the jealousy of governments, but more particularly in ecclesiastical Rome, and the rival principalities of Italy. If two great nations, like those of England and France, had their suspicions and fears roused by a select assembly of philosophical men, and either put them down by force, or closely watched them, this will not seem extraordinary in little despotic states. We have accounts of some philosophical associations at home, which were joined by Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Walter Rawleigh, but which soon got the odium of atheism attached to them; and the

establishment of the French academy occasioned some umbrage, for a year elapsed before the parliament of Paris would register their patent, which was at length accorded by the political Richelieu observing to the president, that, "he should like the members according as the members liked him." Thus we have ascertained one principle, that governments in those times looked on a new society with a political glance; nor is it improbable that some of them combined an ostensible with a latent motive.

There is no want of evidence to prove that the modern Romans, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, were too feelingly alive to their obscured glory, and that they too frequently made invidious comparisons of their ancient republic with the pontifical government; to revive Rome, with every thing Roman, inspired such enthusiasts as Rienzi, and charmed the visions of Petrarch. At a period when ancient literature, as if by a miracle, was raising itself from its grave, the learned were agitated by a correspondent energy; not only was an estate sold to purchase a manuscript, but the relic of genius was touched with a religious emotion. The classical purity

of Cicero was contrasted with the barbarous idiom of the Missal; the glories of ancient Rome with the miserable subjugation of its modern pontiffs; and the metaphysical reveries of Plato, and what they termed the "Enthusiasmus Alexandrinus;" the dreams of the Platonists seemed to the fanciful Italians more elevated than the humble and pure ethics of the Gospels. The vain and amorous Eloisa could even censure the gross manners, as it seemed to her, of the apostles, for picking the ears of corn in their walks, and at their meals eating with unwashed hands. Touched by this mania of antiquity, the learned affected to change their vulgar christian name, by assuming the more classical ones of a Junius Brutus, a Pomponius, or a Julius, or any other rusty name unwashed by baptism. This frenzy for the ancient republic not only menaced the pontificate; but their Platonic, or their pagan ardours, seemed to be striking at the foundation of Christianity itself. Such were Marcillus Ficinus, and that learned society who assembled under the Medici. Pomponius Lætus, who lived at the close of the fifteenth century, not only celebrated by an annual festival the foundation of

Rome, and raised altars to Romulus, but openly expressed his contempt for the christian religion, which this visionary declared was only fit for barbarians ; but this extravagance and irreligion, observes Niceron, were common with many of the learned of those times, and this very Pomponius was at length formally accused of the crime of changing the baptismal names of the young persons whom he taught, for pagan ones ! " This was the taste of the times," says the author we have just quoted ; but it was imagined that there was a mystery concealed in these changes of names.

At this period these literary societies first appear : one at Rome had the title of " Academy," and for its chief this very Pomponius ; for he is distinguished as " Romanæ Princeps Academiæ," by his friend Politian, in the " Miscellanea," of that elegant scholar. This was under the pontificate of Paul the Second. The regular meetings of " the Academy" soon excited the jealousy and suspicions of Paul, and gave rise to one of the most horrid persecutions and scenes of torture, even to death, in which these academicians were involved: This closed with a decree of Paul's,

that for the future no one should pronounce, either seriously or in jest, the very name of *academy*, under the penalty of heresy! The story is told by Platina, one of the sufferers, in his life of Paul the Second; and although this history may be said to bear the bruises of the wounded and dislocated body of the unhappy historian, the facts are unquestionable, and connected with our subject. Platina, Pomponius, and many of their friends, were suddenly dragged to prison; on the first and second day torture was applied, and many expired under the hands of their executioners. "You would have imagined," says Platina, "that the castle of St. Angelo was turned into the bull of Phalaris, so loud the hollow vault resounded with the cries of those miserable young men, who were an honour to their age for genius and learning. The torturers, not satisfied, though weary, having racked twenty men in those two days, of whom some died, at length sent for me to take my turn. The instruments of torture were ready; I was stripped, and the executioners put themselves to their work. Vianesius sat like another Minos on a seat of tapestry-work, gay as at a wedding; and while I hung on the rack in

torment, he played with a jewel which Sanga had, asking him who was the mistress which had given him this love-token? Turning to me, he asked 'why Pomponio in a letter should call me Holy Father?' Did the conspirators agree to make you Pope? 'Pomponio,' I replied, 'can best tell why he gave me this title, for I know not.' At length, having pleased, but not satisfied himself with my tortures, he ordered me to be let down, that I might undergo tortures much greater in the evening. I was carried, half dead, into my chamber; but not long after, the inquisitor having dined, and being fresh in drink, I was fetched again, and the archbishop of Spalatro was there. They inquired of my conversations with Malatesta. I said, it only concerned ancient and modern learning, the military arts, and the characters of illustrious men, the ordinary subjects of conversation. I was bitterly threatened by Vianesius, unless I confessed the truth on the following day, and was carried back to my chamber, where I was seized with such extreme pain, that I had rather have died than endured the agony of my battered and dislocated limbs. But now those who were accused of heresy were charged with

plotting treason. Pomponius being examined why he changed the names of his friends, he answered boldly, that this was no concern of his judges or the pope; it was perhaps out of respect for antiquity, to stimulate to a virtuous emulation. After we had now lain ten months in prison, Paul comes himself to the castle, where he charged us, among other things, that we had disputed concerning the immortality of the soul, and that we held the opinion of Plato; by disputing you call the being of a God in question. This, I said, might be objected to all divines and philosophers, who to make the truth appear, frequently question the existence of souls and of God, and of all separate intelligences. St. Austin says, the opinion of Plato is like the faith of Christians. I followed none of the numerous heretical factions. Paul then accused us of being too great admirers of pagan antiquities; yet none were more fond of them than himself, for he collected all the statues and sarcophagi of the ancients to place in his palace, and even affected to imitate, on more than one occasion, the pomp and charm of their public ceremonies. While they were arguing, mention happened to be made

of "the Academy," when the Cardinal of San Marco cried out, that we were not 'Academics,' but a scandal to the name; and Paul now declared that he would not have that term evermore mentioned under pain of heresy. He left us in a passion, and kept us two months longer in prison to complete the year, as it seems he had sworn."

Such is the interesting narrative of Platina, from which we may surely infer, that if these learned men assembled for the communication of their studies; inquiries suggested by the monuments of antiquity, the two learned languages, ancient authors, and speculative points of philosophy, these objects were associated with others, which terrified the jealousy of modern Rome.

Sometime after, at Naples, appeared the two brothers, John Baptiste and John Vincent Porta, those twin-spirits, the Castor and Pollux of the natural philosophy of that age, and whose scenical museum delighted and awed, by its optical illusions, its treasure of curiosities, and its natural magic, all learned natives and foreigners. Their name is still famous, and their treatises *De humana physiognomia* and *Magia naturalis*, are still opened by the curious, who discover these

children of philosophy, wandering in the arcana of nature, to them a world of perpetual beginnings! These learned brothers united with the Marquis of Manso, the friend of Tasso, in establishing an academy under the whimsical name *degli Oziosi*, (the Lazy) which so ill described their intentions. This academy did not sufficiently embrace the views of the learned brothers, and then they formed another under their own roof, which they appropriately named *di Secreti;* the ostensible motive was, that no one should be admitted into this interior society who had not signalized himself by some experiment or discovery. It is clear, that, whatever they intended by the project, the election of the members was to pass through the most rigid scrutiny—and what was the consequence? The court of Rome again started up with all its fears, and, secretly obtaining information of some discussions which had passed in this academy *degli Secreti*, prohibited the Portas from holding such assemblies, or applying themselves to those illicit sciences, whose amusements are criminal, and turn us aside from the study of the Holy Scriptures*. It seems that

* Niceron, vol. xliii. Art. Porta.

one of the Portas had delivered himself in the style of an ancient oracle; but what was more alarming in this prophetical spirit, several of his predictions had been actually verified! The infallible court was in no want of a new school of prophecy. Baptista Porta went to Rome to justify himself, and, content to wear his head, placed his tongue in the custody of his Holiness, and no doubt preferred being a member of the *Accademia degli Oziosi*, to that of *gli Secreti*. To confirm this notion that these academies excited the jealousy of those despotic states of Italy, I find that several of them at Florence, as well as at Sienna, were considered as dangerous meetings, and in 1568, the Medici suddenly suppressed those of the "Insipids," the "Shy," the "Disheartened," and others, but more particularly the "Stunned," *gli Intronati*, which excited loud laments. We have also an account of an academy which called itself the *Lanternists*, from the circumstance that their first meetings were held at night, the academicians not carrying torches, but only *Lanterns*. This Academy, indeed, was at Toulouse, but evidently formed on the model of its neighbours. In fine, it cannot be

denied, that these literary societies or academies were frequently objects of alarm to the little governments of Italy, and were often interrupted by political persecution.

From all these facts I am inclined to draw an inference. It is remarkable that the first Italian Academies were only distinguished by the simple name of their founders; one was called the Academy of Pomponius Lætus, another of Panormita, *&c.* It was after the melancholy fate of the Roman Academy of Lætus, which could not, however, extinguish that growing desire of creating literary societies in the Italian cities, from which the members derived both honour and pleasure, that suddenly we discover these academies bearing the most fantastical titles. I have not found any writer who has attempted to solve this extraordinary appearance in literary history, and the difficulty seems great, because, however frivolous or fantastical the titles they assumed, their members were illustrious for rank and genius. Tiraboschi, aware of this difficulty, can only express his astonishment at the absurdity, and his vexation at the ridicule to which the Italians have been exposed by the coarse jokes of Menkenius

in his *Charlatanaria Eruditorum**. I conjecture, that the invention of these ridiculous titles, for literary societies, was an attempt to throw a sportive veil over meetings which had alarmed the papal and the other petty courts of Italy; and to quiet their fears, and turn aside their political wrath, they implied the innocence of their pursuits by the jocularity with which the members treated themselves, and were willing that others should treat them. This otherwise inexplicable national levity of so refined a people has not occurred in any other country, because the necessity did not exist any where but in Italy. In France, in Spain, and in England, the title of the ancient ACADEMUS was never profaned by an adjunct, which systematically degraded and ridiculed its venerable character, and its illustrious members.

Long after this article was finished, I had an opportunity of consulting an eminent Italian, whose name is already celebrated in our country, Il Sigr. UGO FOSCOLO; his decision ought neces-

* See Tiraboschi, vol. vii. cap. iv. *Accademie*, and Quadrio's *Della storia e della ragione d'ogni poesia.* In the immense receptacle of these seven quarto volumes, printed with a small type, the curious may consult the voluminous Index, Art. *Accademia.*

sarily to outweigh mine; but although it is incumbent on me to put the reader in possession of the opinion of a native of his high acquirements, it is not as easy for me, on this obscure and curious subject, to relinquish my own conjecture.

Il Sigr. Foscolo is of opinion, that the origin of the fantastical titles assumed by the Italian Academies entirely arose from a desire of getting rid of the air of pedantry, and to insinuate that their meetings and their works were to be considered merely as sportive relaxations, and an idle business.

This opinion may satisfy an Italian, and this he may deem a sufficient apology for such absurdity; but when scarlet robes and cowled heads, laureated bards and *Monsignores*, and *Cavalleros*, baptize themselves in a public assembly "Blockheads" or "Madmen," we *ultramontanes*, out of mere compliment to such great and learned men, would suppose that they had their good reasons; and that in this there must have been "something more than meets the ear." After all, I would almost flatter myself that our two opinions are not so wide of each other as they at first seem to be.

ON THE HERO OF HUDIBRAS; BUTLER VINDICATED.

That great Original, the author of Hudibras, has been recently censured for exposing to ridicule the Sir Samuel Luke, under whose roof he dwelt, in the grotesque character of his hero. The knowledge of the critic in our literary history is not curious; he appears to have advanced no further, than to have taken up the first opinion he found; but this served for an attempt to blacken the moral character of Butler! "Having lived," says our Critic, "in the family of Sir Samuel Luke, one of Cromwell's Captains, at the very time he planned the Hudibras, of which he was pleased to make his *kind and hospitable Patron* the Hero. We defy the history of Whiggism to match this anecdote*,"—as if it could not be matched! Whigs and Tories are as like as two eggs when they are wits and satirists; their friends too often become their first victims! If Sir Samuel resembled that renowned personifi-

* Edinburgh Review, No. 67—159, on Jacobite Relics.

cation, the ridicule was legitimate and unavoidable when the poet had espoused his cause, and espoused it too from the purest motive—a detestation of political and fanatical hypocrisy. Comic satirists, whatever they may allege to the contrary, will always draw largely and most truly from their own circle. After all, it does not appear that Sir Samuel sat for Sir Hudibras; although from the hiatus still in the poem, at the end of Part I, Canto I, his name would accommodate both the metre and the rhyme. But who, said Warburton, ever compared a person to himself! Butler might aim a sly stroke at Sir Samuel by hinting to him how well he resembled Hudibras, but with a remarkable forbearance he has left posterity to settle the affair, which is certainly not worth their while. But Warburton tells, that a friend of Butler's had declared the person was a Devonshire man; one Sir Henry Rosewell, of Ford Abbey, in that county. There is a curious life of our learned wit, in the great General Dictionary; the writer, probably Dr. Birch, made the most authentic researches, from the contemporaries of Butler, or their descendants; and from Charles Longueville, the son of Butler's great friend, he

obtained much of the little we possess. The writer of this life believes that Sir Samuel was the hero of Butler, and rests his evidence on the hiatus we have noticed; but with the candour which becomes the literary historian, he has added the following marginal note: "Whilst this sheet was at press, I was assured by Mr. Longueville, that Sir Samuel Luke *is not the person* ridiculed under the name of HUDIBRAS."

It would be curious, after all, should the prototype of Hudibras turn out to be one of the heroes of "the Rolliad;" a circumstance, which, had it been known to the copartnership of that comic epic, would have furnished a fine episode and a memorable hero to their line of descent. "When BUTLER wrote his Hudibras, *one Coll. Rolle*, a Devonshire man, lodged with him, and was exactly like his description of the Knight; whence it is highly probable, that it was this gentleman, and not Sir Samuel Luke, whose person he had in his eye. The reason that he gave for calling his poem *Hudibras* was, because the name of the old tutelar saint of Devonshire was *Hugh de Bras.*" I find this in the Grub-street Journal, January, 1731, a periodical paper

conducted by two eminent literary physicians, under the appropriate names of Bavius and Mævius *, and which for some time enlivened the town with the excellent design of ridiculing silly authors and stupid critics.

It is unquestionably proved, by the confession of several friends of Butler, that the prototype of Sir Hudibras was a Devonshire man; and if Sir *Hugh de Bras* be the old patron saint of Devonshire, (which however I cannot find in Prince's, or in Fuller's Worthies †,) this discovers

* Bavius and Mævius were Dr. Martyn, the well-known author of the Dissertation on the Eneid of Virgil, and Dr. Russel, another learned physician, as his publications attest. It does great credit to their taste, that they were the hebdomadal defenders of Pope from the attacks of the heroes of the Dunciad.

† There is great reason to doubt the authenticity of this information concerning a Devonshire tutelar saint. Mr. Charles Butler has kindly communicated the researches of a catholic Clergyman, residing at Exeter, who having examined the voluminous registers of the See of Exeter, and numerous MSS. and records, of the Diocese, cannot trace that any such saint was particularly honoured in the county. It is lamentable that ingenious writers should invent fictions, for authorities; but with the hope that the present authors have not done this, I have preserved this apocryphal tradition.

the suggestion which led BUTLER to the *name* of his hero; burlesquing the *new Saint* by pairing him with the chivalrous Saint of the county; hence, like the Knights of old, did

> "Sir *Knight* abandon dwelling,
> And out he rode a *Colonelling!*"

This origin of the name is more appropriate to the character of the work than deriving it from the Sir Hudibras of Spenser, with whom there exists no similitude.

It is as honourable as it is extraordinary, that such was the celebrity of Hudibras, that the workman's name was often confounded with the work itself; the poet was once better known under the name of HUDIBRAS than of BUTLER. Old Southern calls him "Hudibras Butler;" and if any one would read the most copious life we have of this great poet in the great General Dictionary, he must look for a name he is not accustomed to find among English authors—that of *Hudibras!* One fact is remarkable; that, like Cervantes, and unlike Rabelais and Sterne, BUTLER in his great work, has not sent down to posterity a single passage of indecent ribaldry,

though it was written amidst a court which would have got such by heart, and in an age in which such trash was certain of popularity.

We know little more of Butler than we do of Shakespeare and of Spenser! Longueville, the devoted friend of our poet, has unfortunately left no reminiscences of the departed genius whom he so intimately knew, and who bequeathed to Longueville the only legacy a neglected poet could leave—all his manuscripts; and to his care, though not to his spirit, we are indebted for Butler's "Remains." His friend attempted to bury him with the public honours he deserved, among the tombs of his brother-bards in Westminster Abbey; but he was compelled to consign the bard to an obscure burial-place in Paul's, Covent-Garden. Many years after, when Alderman Barber raised an inscription to the memory of Butler in Westminster Abbey, others were desirous of placing one over the poet's humble gravestone. This probably excited some competition; and the following fine one, attributed to Dennis, has perhaps never been published. If it be Dennis's, it must have been composed at one of his most lucid moments.

Near this place lies interred
The body of Mr. Samuel Butler,
Author of Hudibras.
He was a whole species of Poets in one!
Admirable in a Manner
In which no one else has been tolerable;
A Manner which began and ended in Him;
In which he knew no Guide,
And has found no Followers.

To this too brief article I add a proof that that fanaticism, which is branded by our immortal Butler, can survive the castigation. Folly is sometimes immortal, as nonsense is irrefutable. Ancient follies revive, and men repeat the same unintelligible jargon; just as contagion keeps up the plague in Turkey by lying hid in some obscure corner, till it breaks out afresh. Recently we have seen a notable instance where one of the school to which we are alluding, declares of Shakespeare, that "it would have been happy if he had never been born, for that thousands will look back with incessant anguish on the guilty delight which the plays of Shakespeare ministered to them*." Such is the ana-

* See Quarterly Review, vol. viii. p. 111., where I found this quotation justly reprobated.

thema of Shakespeare! We have another of Butler, in "An historic defence of experimental religion;" in which the author contends, that the best men have experienced the agency of the Holy Spirit in an immediate illumination from heaven. He furnishes his historic proofs by a list from Abel to Lady Huntingdon! The author of Hudibras is denounced, "*One* Samuel Butler, a celebrated *buffoon* in the abandoned reign of Charles the Second, wrote a mock-heroic poem, in which he undertook to burlesque the pious puritan. He ridicules all the gracious promises by comparing the *divine illumination* to an *ignis fatuus,* and dark lantern of the spirit*." Such are the writers whose ascetic spirit is still descending among us from the monkery of the deserts, adding poignancy to the very ridicule they would annihilate. The satire which we deemed obsolete, we find still applicable to contemporaries!

The first part of Hudibras is the most perfect; that was the rich fruit of matured meditation, of wit, of learning, and of leisure. A mind of the

* This work, published in 1795, is curious for the materials the writer's reading has collected.

most original powers had been perpetually acted on by some of the most extraordinary events and persons of political and religious history. BUTLER had lived amidst scenes which might have excited indignation and grief; but his strong contempt of the actors could only supply ludicrous images and caustic raillery. Yet once, when villany was at its zenith, his solemn tones were raised to reach it*.

The SECOND part was precipitated in the following year. An interval of fourteen years was allowed to elapse before the THIRD and last part was given to the world; but then every thing had changed! the poet, the subject, and the patron! The old theme of the sectarists had lost its freshness, and the cavaliers, with their royal libertine, had become as obnoxious to public decency at the Tartuffes. BUTLER appears to have turned aside, and to have given an adverse direction to his satirical arrows. The slavery and dotage of Hudibras to the widow revealed the voluptuous epicurean, who slept on his throne, dissolved in the arms of his mistresses. "The enchanted bower,"

* The case of King Charles the First truly stated against John Cook, master of Gray's Inn, in Butler's "Remains."

and "the amorous suit," of Hudibras reflected the new manners of this wretched court; and that BUTLER had become the satirist of the party whose cause he had formerly so honestly espoused, is confirmed by his "Remains," where, among other nervous satires, is one, "On the licentious age of Charles the Second, contrasted with the puritanical one that preceded it." This then is the greater glory of BUTLER, that his high and indignant spirit equally satirized the hypocrites of Cromwell, and the libertines of Charles.

SHENSTONE'S SCHOOL-MISTRESS.

The inimitable "School-Mistress" of Shenstone is one of the felicities of genius; but the purpose of this poem has been entirely misconceived. Johnson, acknowledging this charming effusion to be "the most pleasing of Shenstone's productions," observes, "I know not what claim it has to stand among the *moral works*." The truth is, that it was intended for quite a different class by the author, and Dodsley, the editor of his works, must have strangely blundered in designating it "a moral poem." It may be classed with a species of poetry till recently, rare in our language, and which we sometimes find among the Italians, in their *rime piacevoli*, or *poesie burlesche*, which do not always consist of low humour in a facetious style with jingling rhimes, to which form we attach our idea of a burlesque poem. There is a refined species of ludicrous poetry, which is comic yet tender, lusory yet elegant, and with such a blending of the serious and the facetious, that the result of such a poem may often, among its other

pleasures, produce a sort of ambiguity; so that we do not always know whether the writer is laughing at his subject, or whether he is to be laughed at. Our admirable Whistlecraft met this fate! "The School-Mistress" of SHENSTONE has been admired for its simplicity and tenderness, not for its exquisitely ludicrous turn!

This discovery I owe to the good fortune of possessing the original edition of "The School-Mistress," which the author printed under his own directions, and to his own fancy. To this piece of LUDICROUS POETRY, as he calls it, "lest it should be mistaken," he added a LUDICROUS INDEX, "purely to show fools that I am in jest." But "the fool," his subsequent editor, who, I regret to say, was Robert Dodsley, thought proper to suppress this amusing "ludicrous index," and the consequence is, as the poet foresaw, that his aim has been "mistaken."

The whole history of this poem, and this edition, may be traced in the printed correspondence of SHENSTONE. Our poet had pleased himself by ornamenting "A sixpenny pamphlet" with certain "seemly" designs of his, and for which he came to town to direct the engraver; he appears also

to have intended accompanying it with "The deformed portrait of my old school-dame, Sarah Lloyd." The frontispiece to this first edition represents the "Thatched-house" of his old school-mistress, and before it is the "birch-tree," with "the sun setting and gilding the scene." He writes on this, "I have the first sheet to correct upon the table. I have laid aside the thoughts of fame a good deal in this unpromising scheme; and fix them upon the landskip which is engraving, the red letter which I propose, and the fruit-piece which you see, being the most seemly ornaments of the first sixpenny pamphlet that was ever so highly honoured. I shall incur the same reflection with Ogilby, of having nothing good but my decorations. I expect that in your neighbourhood and in Warwickshire there should be twenty of my poems sold. I print it myself. I am pleased with Mynde's engravings."

On the publication SHENSTONE has opened his idea on its poetical characteristic. "I dare say it must be very incorrect; for I have added eight or ten stanzas within this fortnight. But inaccuracy is more excusable in *ludicrous poetry* than in any other. If it strikes *any*, it must be merely

people of *taste ;* for people of *wit* without taste, which comprehends the larger part of the critical tribe, will unavoidably despise it. I have been at some pains to recover myself from A Philips' misfortune of mere *childishness,* 'Little charm of placid mien,' *&c.* I have added a *ludicrous index* purely to show (fools) that I am in jest; and my motto, 'O, quà sol habitabiles illustrat oras, maxima principum!' is calculated for the same purpose. You cannot conceive how large the number is of those that mistake burlesque for the very foolishness it exposes; which observation I made once at the Rehearsal, at Tom Thumb, at Chrononhotonthologos, all which are pieces of elegant humour. I have some mind to pursue this caution further, and advertise it 'The School-Mistress,' *&c.* a very *childish* performance every body knows (*novorum more*). But if a person seriously calls this, or rather burlesque, a childish or low species of poetry, he says wrong. For the most regular and formal poetry may be called trifling, folly, and weakness, in comparison of what is written with a more *manly* spirit in ridicule of it."

This first edition is now lying before me, with

its splendid " red-letter," its " seemly designs," and, what is more precious, its " Index." SHENSTONE, who had greatly pleased himself with his graphical inventions, at length found that his engraver, Mynde, had sadly bungled with the poet's ideal. Vexed and disappointed, he writes, " I have been plagued to death about the ill-execution of my designs. Nothing is certain in London but expense, which I can ill bear." The truth is, that what is placed in the landskip over the thatched-house, and the birch-tree, is like a falling monster rather than a setting sun; but the fruit-piece at the end, the grapes, the plums, the melon, and the Catharine pears, Mr. Mynde has made sufficiently tempting. This edition contains only twenty-eight stanzas, which were afterwards enlarged to thirty-five. Several stanzas have been omitted, and they have also passed through many corrections, and some improvements, which show that SHENSTONE had more judgment and felicity in severe correction, than perhaps is suspected. Some of these I will point out*.

* I have usually found the School-Mistress printed without numbering the stanzas; to enter into the present view it will

In the second stanza, the *first* edition has,

> In every mart that stands on Britain's isle,
> In every village less reveal'd to fame,
> Dwells there in cottage known about a mile,
> A matron old, whom we school-mistress name.

Improved thus:

> In every village mark'd with little spire,
> Embower'd in trees, and hardly known to fame,
> There dwells in lowly shed and mean attire,
> A matron old, whom we school-mistress name.

The eighth stanza, in the *first* edition, runs,

> The gown, which o'er her shoulders thrown she had,
> Was russet stuff (who knows not russet stuff?)
> Great comfort to her mind that she was clad
> In texture of her own, all strong and tough;
> Ne did she e'er complain, ne deem it rough, *&c.*

More elegantly descriptive is the dress as now delineated:

> A russet stole was o'er her shoulders thrown,
> A russet kirtle fenced the nipping air;
> 'Twas simple russet, but it was her own:
> 'Twas her own country bred the flock so fair,
> 'Twas her own labour did the fleece prepare, *&c.*

be necessary for the reader to do this himself with a pencil-mark.

The additions made to the first edition consist of the 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15th stanzas, in which are so beautifully introduced the herbs and garden stores, and the psalmody of the school-mistress; the 29th and 30th stanzas were also subsequent insertions. But those lines which give so original a view of genius in its infancy,

> A little bench of heedless bishops here,
> And there a chancellor in embryo, *&c.*

were printed in 1742; and I cannot but think that the far-famed stanzas in Gray's Elegy, where he discovers men of genius in peasants, as SHENSTONE has in children, was suggested by this original conception:

> Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
> Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood,

is, to me, a congenial thought, with an echoed turn of expression of the lines from the School-Mistress.

I shall now restore the ludicrous INDEX, and adapt it to the stanzas of the later edition.

	Stanza
Introduction . .	1
The subject proposed .	2
A circumstance in the situation of the MANSION OF EARLY DISCIPLINE, discovering the surprising influence of the connexions of ideas . . .	3
A simile; introducing a deprecation of the joyless effects of BIGOTRY and SUPERSTITION .	4
Some peculiarities indicative of a COUNTRY SCHOOL, with a short sketch of the SOVEREIGN presiding over it.	5
Some account of her NIGHT-CAP, APRON, and a tremendous description of her BIRCHEN SCEPTRE . . .	6
A parallel instance of the advantages of LEGAL GOVERNMENT with regard to children and the wind . . .	7
Her gown . . .	8
Her TITLES, and punctilious nicety in the ceremonious assertion of them . . .	9
A digression concerning her HEN's presumptuous behaviour, with a circumstance tending to give the cautious reader a more accurate idea of the officious diligence and economy of an old woman .	10
A view of this RURAL POTENTATE as seated in her chair of state, conferring HONOURS, distributing BOUNTIES and dispersing PROCLAMATIONS . .	16
Her POLICIES . .	17
The ACTION of the poem commences with a general summons, follows a particular description of the artful structure, decoration, and fortifications of an HORN-BIBLE . .	18
A surprising picture of sisterly affection by way of episode .	20, 21

Stanza

A short list of the methods now in use to avoid a whipping — which nevertheless follows . . . 22

The force of example . 23

A sketch of the particular symptoms of obstinacy as they discover themselves in a child, with a simile illustrating a blubbered face . . 24, 25, 26

A hint of great importance 27

The piety of the poet in relation to that schooldame's memory, who had the first formation of a CERTAIN patriot. [This stanza has been left out in the later editions; it refers to the Duke of Argyle.]

The secret connexion between WHIPPING and RISING IN THE WORLD, with a view, as it were, through a perspective, of the same LITTLE FOLK in the highest posts and reputation 28

An account of the nature of an EMBRYO-FOX-HUNTER. — [Another stanza omitted.]

A deviation to an huckster's shop . . 32

Which being continued for the space of three stanzas, gives the author an opportunity of paying his compliments to a particular county, which he gladly seizes; concluding his piece with respectful mention of the ancient and loyal city of SHREWSBURY.

BEN JONSON ON TRANSLATION.

I HAVE discovered a poem by this great poet, which has even escaped the researches of his last unrivalled editor, Mr. Gifford. Prefixed to a translation, translation is the theme; with us an unvalued art, because our translators have usually been the jobbers of booksellers: but no inglorious one among our French and Italian rivals. In this poem, if the reader's ear be guided by the compressed sense of the massive lines, he may feel a rhythm which, should they be read like our modern metre, he will find wanting; here the fulness of the thoughts form their own cadences. The mind is musical as well as the ear. One verse running into another, and the sense often closing in the middle of a line, is the Club of Hercules; Dryden sometimes succeeded in it, Churchill abused it, and Cowper attempted to revive it. Great force of thought only can wield this verse.

On the AUTHOR, WORKE, *and* TRANSLATOR, *prefixed to the translation of Mateo Alemans's Spanish Rogue*, 1623.

Who tracks this author's or translator's pen
Shall finde, that either, hath read bookes, and men:
To say but one, were single. Then it chimes,
When the old words doe strike on the new times,
As in this Spanish Proteus; who, though writ
But in one tongue, was form'd with the world's wit:
And hath the noblest marke of a good booke,
That an ill man dares not securely looke
Upon it, but will loath, or let it passe,
As a deformed face doth a true glasse.
Such bookes, deserve translators of like coate
As was the genius wherewith they were wrote;
And this hath met that one, that may be stil'd
More than the foster-father of this child;
For though Spaine gave him his first ayre and vogue
He would be call'd, henceforth, *the English rogue*,
But that hee's too well suted, in a cloth,
Finer than was his Spanish, if my oath
Will be receiv'd in court; if not, would I
Had cloath'd him so! Here's all I can supply
To your desert who have done it, friend! And this
Faire æmulation, and no envy is;
When you behold me wish my selfe, the man
That would have done, that, which you only can!

BEN JONSON.

The translator of *Guzman* was James Mabbe, which he disguised under the Spanish pseudonym of *Diego Puede-ser; Diego* for *James*, and *Puede-ser*,

for *Mabbe* or *May-be!* He translated with the same spirit as his Guzman, *Celestina*, or the Spanish bawd; a version still more remarkable. He had resided a considerable time in Spain, and was a perfect master of both languages; a rare talent in a translator; and the consequence is, that he is a translator of Genius.

THE LOVES OF "THE LADY ARABELLA*."

Where London's towre its turrets show
  So stately by the Thames's side,
Faire Arabella, child of woe!
  For many a day had sat and sighed.

And as shee heard the waves arise,
  And as shee heard the bleake windes roare,
As fast did heave her heartfelte sighes,
  And still so fast her teares did poure!

Arabella Stuart, in Evans's Old Ballads.
(probably written by Mickle.)

The name of Arabella Stuart, Mr. Lodge observes, "is scarcely mentioned in history." The whole life of this lady seems to consist of secret history, which, probably, we cannot now recover. The writers who have ventured to weave together her loose and scattered story are ambiguous and contradictory. How such

* Long after this article was composed, Miss Aikin published her "Court of James the First." That agreeable writer has written her popular volumes, without wasting the bloom of life in the dust of libraries, and our female historian has not occasioned me to alter a single sentence in these researches.

slight domestic incidents as her life consisted of could produce results so greatly disproportioned to their apparent cause, may always excite our curiosity. Her name scarcely ever occurs without raising that sort of interest which accompanies mysterious events, and more particularly when we discover that this lady is so frequently alluded to by her foreign contemporaries,

The historians of the Lady Arabella have all fallen into the grossest errors. Her chief historian has committed a violent injury on her very person, which, in the history of a female, is not the least important. In hastily consulting two passages relative to her, he applied to the Lady Arabella the defective understanding and headstrong dispositions of her aunt, the Countess of Shrewsbury ; and by another misconception of a term, as I think, asserts that the Lady Arabella was distinguished neither for beauty, nor intellectual qualities*. This authoritative decision perplexed the modern editor, Kippis, whose re-

* Morant in the Biographa Britannica. This gross blunder has been detected by Mr. Lodge. The other I submit to the reader's judgment. A contemporary letter-writer, alluding to the flight of Arabella and Seymour, which alarmed the Scottish so much more than the English party, tells us, among

searches were always limited; Kippis had gleaned from Oldys's precious manuscripts a single note, which shook to its foundations the whole structure before him; and he had also found, in Ballard, to his utter confusion, some hints that the Lady ARABELLA was a learned woman, and of a poetical genius, though even the writer himself, who had recorded this discovery, was at a loss to ascertain the fact! It is amusing to observe honest George Ballard in the same dilemma as honest Andrew Kippis. "This lady," he says, "was not more distinguished for the dignity of her birth, than celebrated for her fine parts and

other reasons of the little danger of the political influence of the parties themselves over the people, that not only their pretensions were far removed, but he adds, "They were UNGRACEFUL both in their *persons* and their *houses*." Morant takes the term UNGRACEFUL in its modern acceptation; but in the style of that day, I think, UNGRACEFUL is opposed to GRACIOUS in the eyes of the people, meaning that their *persons* and their *houses* were not considerable to the multitude. Would it not be absurd to apply *ungraceful* in its modern sense to a *family* or *house*? And had any political danger been expected, assuredly it would not have been diminished by the want of *personal grace* in these lovers. I do not recollect any authority for the sense of *ungraceful* in opposition to *gracious*, but a critical and literary antiquary has sanctioned my opinion.

learning; and yet," he adds, in all the simplicity of his ingenuousness, "I know so little in relation to the two last accomplishments, that I should not have given her a place in these memoirs had not Mr. Evelyn put her in his list of learned women, and Mr. Philips (Milton's nephew) introduced her among his modern poetesses."

"The Lady ARABELLA," for by that name she is usually noticed by her contemporaries, rather than by her maiden name of Stuart, or by her married one of Seymour, as she latterly subscribed herself, was, by her affinity with James the First, and our Elizabeth, placed near the throne; too near, it seems, for her happiness and quiet! In their common descent from Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry VII., she was cousin to the Scottish monarch, but born an Englishwoman, which gave her some advantage in a claim to the throne of England. "Her double relation to royalty," says Mr. Lodge, "was equally obnoxious to the jealousy of Elizabeth, and the timidity of James, and they secretly dreaded the supposed danger of her having a legitimate offspring." Yet James himself, then unmarried, proposed for the husband of the Lady ARABELLA

one of her cousins, Lord Esme Stuart, whom he had created Duke of Lenox, and designed for his heir. The first thing we hear of "the Lady Arabella" concerns a marriage: marriages are the incidents of her life, and the fatal event which terminated it was a marriage. Such was the secret spring on which her character and her misfortunes revolved.

This proposed match was desirable to all parties; but there was one greater than them all, who forbad the bans. Elizabeth interposed; she imprisoned the Lady Arabella, and would not deliver her up to the king, of whom she spoke with asperity, and even with contempt*. The greatest infirmity of Elizabeth was her mysterious conduct respecting the succession to the English throne; her jealousy of power, her strange un-

* A circumstance which we discover by a Spanish memorial, when our James I. was negotiating with the cabinet of Madrid. He complains of Elizabeth's treatment of him; that the queen refused to give him his father's estate in England, nor would deliver up his uncle's daughter, Arabella, to be married to the Duke of Lenox, at which time the queen *uso palabras muy asperas y de mucho disprechia contra el dicho Rey de Escocia;* she used harsh words, expressing much contempt of the king. Winwood's Mem. i. 4.

happiness in the dread of personal neglect, made her averse to see a successor in her court, or even to hear of a distant one ; in a successor she could only view a competitor. Camden tells us that she frequently observed, that " most men neglected the setting-sun," and this melancholy presentiment of personal neglect this political coquette not only lived to experience, but even this circumstance of keeping the succession unsettled miserably disturbed the Queen on her death-bed. Her ministers, it appears, harassed her when she was lying speechless ; a remarkable circumstance, which has hitherto escaped the knowledge of her numerous historians, and which I shall take an opportunity of disclosing in this volume.

Elizabeth leaving a point so important always problematical, raised up the very evil she so greatly dreaded ; it multiplied the aspirants, while every party humoured itself by selecting its own claimant, and none more busily than the continental powers. One of the most curious is the project of the Pope, who intending to put aside James I. on account of his religion, formed a chimerical scheme of uniting Arabella with a prince of the house of Savoy ; the pretext, for

without a pretext no politician moves, was their descent from a bastard of our Edward IV.; the Duke of Parma was, however, married, but the Pope, in his infallibility, turned his brother the Cardinal into the Duke's substitute by secularising the churchman. In that case the Cardinal would then become King of England in right of this lady!—provided he obtained the crown*!

We might conjecture from this circumstance, that Arabella was a catholic, and so Mr. Butler has recently told us; but I know of no other authority than Dodd, the Catholic historian, who has inscribed her name among his party. Parsons, the wily jesuit, was so doubtful how the lady, when young, stood disposed towards catholicism, that he describes "her religion to be as tender, green and flexible, as is her age and sex, and to be wrought hereafter and settled according to future events and times." Yet in 1611,

* See a very curious letter, the CCXCIX of Cardinal D'Ossat, Vol. v. The catholic interest expected to facilitate the conquest of England by joining their armies with those of "Arbelle," and the commentator writes that this English lady had a party, consisting of all those English who had been the judges or the avowed enemies of Mary of Scotland, the mother of James the First.

when she was finally sent into confinement, one well informed of court affairs writes, "that the Lady Arabella hath *not been found inclinable to popery* *."

Even Henry IV. of France was not unfriendly to this papistical project of placing an Italian cardinal on the English throne. It had always been the state interest of the French cabinet to favour any scheme which might preserve the realms of England and Scotland as separate kingdoms. The manuscript correspondence of Charles IX. with his ambassador at the court of London, which I have seen, tends solely to this great purpose, and perhaps it was her French and Spanish allies which finally hastened the political martyrdom of the Scottish Mary.

Thus we have discovered *two* chimerical husbands of the Lady Arabella. The *pretensions* of this lady to the throne had evidently become an object with speculating politicians; and perhaps it was to withdraw herself from the embarrassments into which she was thrown, that, according to De Thou, she intended to marry a son of the Earl of Northumberland; but to the jealous terror

* Winwood's Memorials, iii. 281.

of Elizabeth, an English Earl was not an object of less magnitude than a Scotch Duke. This is the *third* shadowy husband!

When James I. ascended the English throne, there existed an Anti-Scottish party. Hardly had the northern monarch entered into the "Land of Promise," when his southern throne was shaken by a foolish plot, which one writer calls "a state riddle;" it involved Rawleigh, and unexpectedly the Lady Arabella. The Scottish monarch was to be got rid of, and Arabella was to be crowned. Some of these silly conspirators having written to her requesting letters to be addressed to the King of Spain, she laughed at the letter she received, and sent it to the King. Thus for a *second* time was Arabella to have been Queen of England. This occurred in 1603, but was followed by no harsh measures from James the First.

In the following year, 1604, I have discovered that for the *third* time, the lady was offered a crown! "A great embassador is coming from the King of Poland, whose chief errand is to demand my Lady Arabella in marriage for his master. So may your princess of the blood grow a great queen, and then we shall be safe from *the*

*danger of missuperscribing letters**." This last passage seems to allude to something. What is meant of "the danger of missuperscribing letters?"

If this royal offer was ever made, it was certainly forbidden. Can we imagine the refusal to have come from the lady, who, we shall see, seven years afterwards, complained that the king had neglected her, in not providing her with a suitable match? It was this very time that one of those butterflies, who quiver on the fair flowers of a court, writes, that "My Ladye Arbella spends her time in lecture, reiding, *&c.*, and she will not hear of marriage. Indirectly there were speaches used in the recommendation of Count Maurice, who pretendeth to be Duke of Guildres. I dare not attempt her†." Here we find another

* This manuscript letter from William, Earl of Pembroke, to Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury, is dated from Hampton-Court, Oct. 3, 1604. Sloane's MSS. 4161.

† Lodge's Illustrations of British History, iii. 286. It is curious to observe, that this letter by W. Fowler, is dated on the same day as the manuscript letter I have just quoted, and it is directed to the same Earl of Shrewsbury; so that the Earl must have received, in one day, accounts of two different projects of marriage for his niece! This shows how much

princely match proposed. Thus far, to the Lady Arabella, crowns and husbands were like a fairy banquet seen at moonlight, opening on her sight, impalpable and vanishing at the moment of approach.

Arabella, from certain circumstances, was a dependent on the king's bounty, which flowed very unequally; often reduced to great personal distress, we find by her letters, that "she prayed for present money, though it should not be annually." I have discovered that James at length granted her a pension. The royal favours, however, were probably limited to her good behaviour*.

From 1604 to 1608, is a period which forms a blank leaf in the story of Arabella. In this last year this unfortunate lady had again fallen out of favour, and, as usual, the cause was mysterious, and not known even to the writer. Chamber-

Arabella engaged the designs of foreigners and natives. Will. Fowler was a rhyming and fantastical secretary to the queen of James the First.

* Two letters of Arabella, on distress of money, are preserved by Ballard. The discovery of a *pension* I made in Sir Julius Cæsar's manuscripts; where one is mentioned of 1600*l.* to the Lady Arabella. Sloane's MS. 4160.

Mr. Lodge has shown that the king once granted her the duty on oats.

lain, in a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, mentions, "the Lady Arabella's business, *whatsoever it was*, is ended, and she restored to her former place and graces. The king gave her a cupboard of plate, better than 200*l.* for a new year's gift, and 1000 marks to pay her debts, besides some yearly addition to her maintenance, want being thought the chiefest cause of her discontentment, though *she be not altogether free from suspicion of being collapsed**." Another mysterious expression which would seem to allude either to politics or religion; but the fact appears by another writer to have been a discovery of a new project of marriage without the king's consent. This person of her choice is not named; and it was to divert her mind from the too constant object of her thoughts, that James, after a severe reprimand, had invited her to partake of the festivities of the court, in that season of revelry and reconciliation.

We now approach that event of the Lady Arabella's life, which reads like a romantic fiction: the catastrophe, too, is formed by the Aristotelian canon; for its misery, its pathos, and its terror, even romantic fiction has not exceeded!

It is probable that the king, from some political

* Winwood's Memorials, iii. 117—119.

motive, had decided that the Lady Arabella should lead a single life; but such wise purposes frequently meet with cross ones; and it happened that no woman was ever more solicited to the conjugal state, or seems to have been so little averse to it. Every noble youth, who sighed for distinction, ambitioned the notice of the Lady Arabella; and she was so frequently contriving a marriage for herself, that a courtier of that day writing to another, observes, "these affectations of marriage in her, do give some advantage to the world of impairing the reputation of her constant and virtuous disposition *."

The revels of Christmas had hardly closed, when the Lady Arabella forgot that she had been forgiven, and again relapsed into her old infirmity. She renewed a connexion, which had commenced in childhood, with Mr. William Seymour, the second son of Lord Beauchamp, and grandson of the Earl of Hertford. His character has been finely described by Clarendon: He loved his studies and his repose; but when the civil wars broke out, he closed his volumes and drew his sword, and was both an active and a

* Winwood's Memorials, Vol. iii. 119.

skilful general. Charles I. created him Marquis of Hertford, and governor of the prince; he lived to the Restoration, and Charles II. restored him to the dukedom of Somerset.

This treaty of marriage was detected in February 1609, and the parties summoned before the privy council. Seymour was particularly censured for daring to ally himself with the royal blood, although that blood was running in his own veins. In a manuscript letter which I have discovered, Seymour addressed the lords of the privy council. The style is humble; the plea to excuse his intended marriage is, that being but "A young brother, and sensible of mine own good, unknown to the world, of mean estate, not born to challenge any thing by my birthright, and therefore my fortunes to be raised by mine own endeavour, and she a lady of great honour and virtue, and, as I thought, of great means, I did plainly and honestly endeavour lawfully to gain her in marriage." There is nothing romantic in this apology, in which Seymour describes himself as a fortune hunter! which, however, was probably done to cover his undoubted affection for Arabella, whom he had early known. He says, that "he con-

ceived that this noble lady might, without offence, make the choice of any subject within this kingdom; which conceit was begotten in me upon a general report, after her ladyship's *last being called before your lordships* *, that it might be." He tells the story of this ancient wooing—"I boldly intruded myself into her ladyship's chamber in the court on Candlemass day last, at what time I imparted my desire unto her, which was entertained, but with this caution on either part, that both of us resolved not to proceed to any final conclusion without his majesty's most gracious favour first obtained. And this was our first meeting! After that we had a second meeting at Briggs's house in Fleet-street, and then a third at Mr. Baynton's; at both which we had the like conference and resolution as before." He assures their lordships that both of them had never intended marriage without his majesty's approbation †.

* This evidently alludes to the gentleman whose name appears not, which occasioned Arabella to incur the king's displeasure before Christmas; the Lady Arabella, it is quite clear, was resolvedly bent on marrying herself!

† Harl. MSS. 7003.

But Love laughs at privy councils, and the grave promises made by two frightened lovers. The parties were secretly married, which was discovered about July in the following year. They were then separately confined, the lady at the house of Sir Thomas Parry at Lambeth, and Seymour in the Tower, for " his contempt in marrying a lady of the royal family without the king's leave."

This, their first confinement, was not rigorous ; the lady walked in her garden, and the lover was a prisoner at large in the Tower. The writer in the Biographia Britannica observes, that " Some intercourse they had by letters, which, after a time, was discovered." In this history of love these might be precious documents, and in the library at Long-leat, these love-epistles, or perhaps this volume, may yet lie unread in a corner*. Arabella's epistolary talent was not vulgar: Dr. Montford, in a manuscript letter, describes one of those effusions which Arabella addressed to the king. " This letter was penned by her in the

* It is on record that at Long-leat, the seat of the Marquis of Bath, certain papers of Arabella are preserved. I leave to the noble owner the pleasure of the research.

best terms, as she can do right well. It was often read without offence, nay, it was even commended by his highness, with the applause of prince and council." One of these amatory letters I have recovered. The circumstance is domestic, being nothing more at first than a very pretty letter on Mr. Seymour having taken cold, but, as every love-letter ought, it is not without a pathetic *crescendo ;* the tearing away of hearts so firmly joined, while, in her solitary imprisonment, the secret thought that he lived and was her own, filled her spirit with that consciousness which triumphed even over that sickly frame so nearly subdued to death. The familiar style of James the First's age may bear comparison with our own. I shall give it entire.

"LADY ARABELLA TO MR. WILLIAM SEYMOUR.

"Sir,

"I am exceeding sorry to hear you have not been well. I pray you let me know truly how you do, and what was the cause of it. I am not satisfied with the reason Smith gives for it; but if it be a cold, I will impute it to some sympathy betwixt us, having myself gotten

a swollen cheek at the same time with a cold. For God's sake, let not your grief of mind work upon your body. You may see by me what inconveniences it will bring one to; and no fortune, I assure you, daunts me so much as that weakness of body I find in myself; for *si nous vivons l'age d'un veau*, as Marot says, we may, by God's grace, be happier than we look for, in being suffered to enjoy ourself with his majesty's favour. But if we be not able to live to it, I, for my part, shall think myself a pattern of misfortune in enjoying so great a blessing as you, so little awhile. No separation but that deprives me of the comfort of you. For wheresoever you be, or in what state soever you are, it sufficeth me you are mine! *Rachel wept and would not be comforted, because her children were no more.* And that, indeed, is the remediless sorrow, and none else! And therefore God bless us from that, and I will hope well of the rest, though I see no apparent hope. But I am sure God's book mentioneth many of his children in as great distress that have done well after, even in this world! I do assure you nothing the state can do with me can trouble me so much as this news of your being ill doth; and you see

when I am troubled, I trouble you too with tedious kindness; for so I think you will account so long a letter, yourself not having written to me this good while so much as how you do. But, sweet sir, I speak not this to trouble you with writing but when you please. Be well, and I shall account myself happy in being

"Your faithfull loving wife,

"ARB. S.*"

In examining the manuscripts of this lady, the defect of dates must be supplied by our sagacity. The following "petition," as she calls it, addressed to the king in defence of her secret marriage, must have been written at this time. She remonstrates with the king for what she calls his neglect of her; and while she fears to be violently separated from her husband, she asserts her cause with a firm and noble spirit, which was afterwards too severely tried!

"TO THE KING.

"May it please your most excellent Majesty.

"I do most heartily lament my hard fortune that I should offend your majesty the least

* Harl. MSS. 7003.

especially in that whereby I have long desired to merit of your majesty, as appeared before your majesty was my sovereign. And though your majesty's neglect of me, my good liking of this gentleman that is my husband, and my fortune, drew me to a contract before I acquainted your majesty, I humbly beseech your majesty to consider how impossible it was for me to imagine it could be offensive to your majesty, having *few days before given me your royal consent to bestow myself on any subject of your majesty's* (which likewise your majesty had done long since). Besides, never having been either prohibited any, or spoken to for any, in this land, by your majesty *these seven years* that I have lived in your majesty's house, I could not conceive that your majesty regarded my marriage at all; whereas if your majesty had vouchsafed to tell me your mind, and accept the free-will offering of my obedience, I would not have offended your majesty, of whose gracious goodness I presume so much, that *if it were now as convenient in a worldly respect, as malice may make it seem to separate us, whom God hath joined,* your majesty would not do evil that good might come thereof, nor make me, that have the

honour to be so near your majesty in blood, the first precedent that ever was, though our princes may have left some as little imitable, for so good and gracious a king as your majesty, as David's dealing with Uriah. But I assure myself, if it please your majesty in your own wisdom to consider thoroughly of my cause, there will no solid reason appear to debar me of justice and your princely favour, which I will endeavour to deserve whilst I breathe."

It is indorsed, "A copy of my petition to the King's Majesty." In another she implores that "If the necessity of my state and fortune, together with my weakness, have caused me to do somewhat not pleasing to your majesty, let it be all covered with the shadow of your royal benignity." Again, in another petition, she writes,

"Touching the offence for which I am now punished, I most humbly beseech your majesty, in your most princely wisdom and judgment, to consider in what a miserable state I had been, if I had taken any other course than I did; for my own conscience witnessing before God that I was then the wife of him that now I am, I could never have matched with any other man, but to

have lived all the days of my life as a harlot, which your majesty would have abhorred in any, especially in one who hath the honour (how otherwise unfortunate soever) to have any drop of your majesty's blood in them."

I find a letter of Lady Jane Drummond, in reply to this or another petition, which Lady Drummond had given the queen to present to his majesty. It was to learn the cause of Arabella's confinement. The pithy expression of James the First is characteristic of the monarch; and the solemn forebodings of Lady Drummond, who appears to have been a lady of excellent judgment, showed, by the fate of Arabella, how they were true!

"LADY JANE DRUMMOND TO LADY ARABELLA,

Answering her prayer to know the cause of her confinement.

"This day her majesty hath seen your ladyship's letter. Her Majesty says, that when she gave your ladyship's petition to his majesty, he did take it well enough, but gave no other answer than that *ye had eaten of the forbidden tree.* This was all her majesty commanded me to say

to your ladyship in this purpose; but withal did remember her kindly to your ladyship, and sent you this little token in witness of the continuance of her majesty's favour to your ladyship. Now, where your ladyship desires me to deal openly and freely with you, I protest I can say nothing on knowledge, for I never spoke to any of that purpose but to the queen; *but the wisdom of this state, with the example how some of your quality in the like case has been used, makes me fear that ye shall not find so easy end to your troubles as ye expect or I wish.*"

In return, Lady Arabella expresses her grateful thanks—presents her majesty with "this piece of my work, to accept in remembrance of the poor prisoner that wrought them, in hopes her royal hands will vouchsafe to wear them, which till I have the honour to kiss, I shall live in a great deal of sorrow. Her case," she adds, "could be compared to no other she ever heard of, resembling no other." Arabella, like the queen of the Scots, beguiled the hours of imprisonment by works of embroidery; for in sending a present of this kind to Sir Andrew Sinclair to be presented to the queen, she thanks him for

" vouchsafing to descend to these petty offices to take care even of these womanish toys, for her whose serious mind must invent some relaxation."

The secret correspondence of Arabella and Seymour was discovered, and was followed by a sad scene. It must have been now that the king resolved to consign this unhappy lady to the stricter care of the Bishop of Durham. Lady Arabella was so subdued at this distant separation, that she gave way to all the wildness of despair; she fell suddenly ill, and could not travel but in a litter, and with a physician. In her way to Durham, she was so greatly disquieted in the first few miles of her uneasy and troublesome journey, that they would proceed no further than to Highgate. The physician returned to town to report her state, and declared that she was assuredly very weak, her pulse dull and melancholy, and very irregular; her countenance very heavy, pale, and wan; and though free from fever, he declared her in no case fit for travel. The king observed, " It is enough to make any sound man sick to be carried in a bed in that manner she is; much more for her *whose impatient and unquiet spirit heapeth upon her-*

self far greater indisposition of body than otherwise she would have." His resolution, however, was, that "she should proceed to Durham, if he were king!" "We answered," replied the doctor, "that we made no doubt of her obedience."—"Obedience is that required," replied the king, "which being performed, I will do more for her than she expected*."

The king, however, with his usual indulgence, appears to have consented that Lady Arabella should remain for a month at Highgate, in confinement, till she had sufficiently recovered to proceed to Durham, where the bishop posted, unaccompanied by his charge, to await her reception, and to the great relief of the friends of the lady, who hoped she was still within the reach of their cares, or of the royal favour.

A second month's delay was granted, in consequence of that letter which we have before noticed as so impressive and so elegant, that it was commended by the king, and applauded by prince Henry and the council.

But the day of her departure hastened, and

* These particulars I derive from the manuscript letters among the papers of Arabella Stuart. Harl. MSS. 7003.

the Lady Arabella betrayed no symptom of her first despair. She openly declared her resignation to her fate, and showed her obedient willingness, by being even over-careful in little preparations to make easy so long a journey. Such tender grief had won over the hearts of her keepers, who could not but sympathize with a princess, whose love, holy and wedded too, was crossed only by the tyranny of statesmen. But Arabella had not within that tranquillity with which she had lulled her keepers. She and Seymour had concerted a flight, as bold in its plot, and as beautifully wild, as any recorded in romantic story. The day preceding her departure, Arabella found it not difficult to persuade a female attendant to consent that she would suffer her to pay a last visit to her husband, and to wait for her return at an appointed hour. More solicitous for the happiness of lovers than for the repose of kings, this attendant, in utter simplicity, or with generous sympathy, assisted the Lady Arabella in dressing her in one of the most elaborate disguisings. "She drew a pair of large French-fashioned hose or trowsers over her petticoats; put on a man's doublet or coat; a peruke,

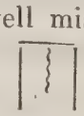
such as men wore, whose long locks covered her own ringlets; a black hat, a black cloak, russet boots with red tops, and a rapier by her side." Thus accoutred, the Lady Arabella stole out with a gentleman about three o'clock in the afternoon. She had only proceeded a mile and a half, when they stopped at a poor inn, where one of her confederates was waiting with horses, yet she was so sick and faint, that the ostler, who held her stirrup, observed, that "the gentleman could hardly hold out to London." She recruited her spirits by riding; the blood mantled in her face, and at six o'clock our sick lover reached Blackwall, where a boat and servants were waiting. The watermen were at first ordered to Woolwich; there they were desired to push on to Gravesend, then to Tilbury, where, complaining of fatigue, they landed to refresh; but, tempted by their freight, they reached Lee. At the break of morn they discovered a French vessel riding there to receive the lady; but as Seymour had not yet arrived, Arabella was desirous to lie at anchor for her lord, conscious that he would not fail to his appointment. If he indeed had been prevented in his escape, she herself

cared not to preserve the freedom she now possessed; but her attendants, aware of the danger of being overtaken by a king's ship, over-ruled her wishes, and hoisted sail, which occasioned so fatal a termination to this romantic adventure. Seymour indeed had escaped from the Tower; he had left his servant watching at his door to warn all visitors not to disturb his master, who lay ill with a raging tooth-ach, while Seymour in disguise stole away alone, following a cart which had just brought wood to his apartment. He passed the warders; he reached the wharf, and found his confidential man waiting with a boat, and he arrived at Lee. The time pressed; the waves were rising; Arabella was not there; but in the distance he descried a vessel. Hiring a fisherman to take him on board, to his grief, on hailing it, he discovered that it was not the French vessel charged with his Arabella; in despair and confusion he found another ship from Newcastle, which for a good sum altered its course, and landed him in Flanders. In the mean while the escape of Arabella was first known to government, and the hot alarm which spread may seem ludicrous to us. The political consequences at-

tached to the union and the flight of these two doves from their cotes, shook with consternation the grey owls of the cabinet, more particularly the Scotch party, who, in their terror, paralleled it with the gunpowder treason, and some political danger must have impended, at least in their imagination, for Prince Henry partook of this cabinet panic.

Confusion and alarm prevailed at court; couriers were despatched swifter than the winds wafted the unhappy Arabella, and all was hurry in the sea-ports. They sent to the Tower to warn the lieutenant to be doubly vigilant over Seymour, who, to his surprise, discovered that his prisoner had ceased to be so for several hours. James at first was for issuing a proclamation in a style so angry and vindictive, that it required the moderation of Cecil to preserve the dignity while he concealed the terror of his majesty. By the admiral's detail of his impetuous movements, he seemed in pursuit of an enemy's fleet; for the courier is urged, and the post-masters are roused by a superscription, which warned them of the eventful despatch: "Haste, haste, post haste!

Haste for your life, your life* !" The family of the Seymours were in a state of distraction; and a letter from Mr. Francis Seymour to his grandfather, the Earl of Hertford, residing then at his seat far remote from the capital, to acquaint him of the escape of his brother and the lady, still bears to posterity a remarkable evidence of the trepidations and consternation of the old earl: it arrived in the middle of the night, accompanied by a summons to attend the privy-council. In the perusal of a letter written in a small hand, and filling more than two folio pages, such was his agitation, that in holding the taper he must have burnt what he probably had not read; the letter is scorched, and the flame has perforated it in so critical a part, that the poor old earl

* "This emphatic injunction," observes my friend Mr. Hamper, "would be effective when the messenger could read;" but in a letter written by the Earl of Essex about the year 1597, to the Lord High Admiral at Plymouth, I have seen added to the words "Hast, hast, hast for lyfe!" the expressive symbol of *a gallows prepared with a halter*, which could not be well misunderstood by the most illiterate of Mercuries, thus 

journeyed to town in a state of uncertainty and confusion. Nor was his terror so unreasonable as it seems. Treason had been a political calamity with the Seymours. Their progenitor the Duke of Somerset the protector, had found that "all his honours," as Frankland strangely expresses it, "had helped him too forwards to hop headless." Henry, Elizabeth, and James, says the same writer, considered that it was needful, as indeed in all sovereignties, that those who were near the crown "should be narrowly looked into for marriage."

But we have left the lady Arabella alone and mournful on the seas, not praying for favourable gales to convey her away; but still imploring her attendants to linger for her Seymour; still straining her sight to the point of the horizon for some speck which might give a hope of the approach of the boat freighted with all her love. Alas! Never more was Arabella to cast a single look on her lover and her husband! She was overtaken by a pink in the king's service, in Calais roads; and now she declared that she cared not to be brought back again to her imprisonment should

Seymour escape, whose safety was dearest to her!

The life of the unhappy, the melancholy, and the distracted Arabella Stuart is now to close in an imprisonment, which lasted only four years; for her constitutional delicacy, her rooted sorrows, and the violence of her feelings, sunk beneath the hopelessness of her situation, and a secret resolution in her mind to refuse the aid of her physicians, and to wear away the faster if she could, the feeble remains of life. But who shall paint the emotions of a mind which so much grief, and so much love, and distraction itself, equally possessed?

What passed in that dreadful imprisonment cannot perhaps be recovered for authentic history; but enough is known; that her mind grew impaired, that she finally lost her reason, and if the duration of her imprisonment was short, it was only terminated by her death. Some loose effusions, often begun and never ended, written and erased, incoherent and rational, yet remain in the fragments of her papers. In a letter she proposed addressing to Viscount Fenton, to im-

plore for her his majesty's favour again, she says, "Good, my lord, consider the fault cannot be uncommitted; neither can any more be required of any earthly creature but confession and most humble submission." In a paragraph she had written, but crossed out, it seems that a present of her work had been refused by the king, and that she had no one about her whom she might trust.

"Help will come too late; and be assured that *neither physician nor other, but whom I think good, shall come about me while I live,* till I have his majesty's favour, without which I desire not to live. And *if you remember of old, I dare die,* so I be not guilty of my own death, and oppress others with my ruin too, if *there be no other way,* as God forbid, to whom I commit you; and rest as assuredly as heretofore, if you be the same to me,

"Your lordship's faithful friend,

"A. S."

That she had frequently meditated on suicide appears by another letter—"I could not be so unchristian as to be the cause of my own death. Consider what the world would conceive if I should be violently inforced to do it."

One fragment we may save as an evidence of her utter wretchedness.

"In all humility, the most wretched and unfortunate creature that ever lived, prostrates itselfe at the feet of the most merciful king that ever was, desiring nothing but mercy and favour, not being more afflicted for any thing than for the losse of that which hath binne this long time the onely comfort it had in the world, and which, if it weare to do again, I would not adventure the losse of for any other worldly comfort; mercy it is I desire, and that for God's sake!"

Such is the history of the Lady Arabella, who from some circumstances not sufficiently opened to us, was an important personage, designed by others, at least, to play a high character in the political drama. Thrice selected as a queen; but the consciousness of royalty was only felt in her veins while she lived in the poverty of dependence. Many gallant spirits aspired after her hand, but when her heart secretly selected one beloved, it was for ever deprived of domestic happiness! She is said not to have been beautiful, and to have been beautiful; and her very portrait, ambiguous as her life, is neither the one nor the other. She is said to have been a poetess,

and not a single verse substantiates her claim to the laurel. She is said not to have been remarkable for her intellectual accomplishments, yet I have found a Latin letter of her composition in her manuscripts. The materials of her life are so scanty that it cannot be written, and yet we have sufficient reason to believe that it would be as pathetic as it would be extraordinary, could we narrate its involved incidents, and paint forth her delirious feelings. Acquainted rather with her conduct than with her character, for us the Lady Arabella has no palpable historical existence; and we perceive rather her shadow than herself! A writer of romance might render her one of those interesting personages whose griefs have been deepened by their royalty, and whose adventures, touched with the warm hues of love and distraction, closed at the bars of her prison-grate: a sad example of a female victim to the state!

"Through one dim lattice, fring'd with ivy round,
Successive suns a languid radiance threw,
To paint how fierce her angry guardian frown'd,
To mark how fast her waning beauty flew!"

Seymour, who was afterwards permitted to return, distinguished himself by his loyalty

through three successive reigns, and retained his romantic passion for the lady of his first affections; for he called the daughter he had by his second lady by the ever-beloved name of Arabella Stuart.

DOMESTIC HISTORY OF SIR EDWARD COKE.

Sir Edward Coke—or Cook, as now pronounced, and occasionally so written in his own times—that lord chief-justice whose name the laws of England will preserve—has shared the fate of his great rival the Lord Chancellor Bacon—for no hand worthy of their genius has pursued their story. Bacon, busied with nature, forgot himself; Coke, who was only the greatest of lawyers, reflected with more complacency on himself; for "among those thirty books which he had written with his own hand, most pleasing to himself, was a manual which he called *Vade Mecum*, from whence, at one view, he took a prospect of his life past." This manuscript, which Lloyd notices, was among the fifty which, on his death, were seized on by an order of council, but some years after were returned to his heir, and this precious memorial may still be disinterred *.

* This conjecture may not be vain; since this has been written, I have heard that the papers of Sir Edward Coke are

Coke was "the oracle of law," but, like too many great lawyers, he was so completely one, as to have been nothing else; armed with law, he committed acts of injustice, for in how many cases, passion mixing itself with law, *Summum Jus* becomes *Summa Injuria*. Official violence brutalized, and political ambition extinguished, every spark of nature in this great lawyer, when he struck at his victims, public or domestic. His solitary knowledge, perhaps, had deadened his judgment in other studies; and yet his narrow spirit could shrink with jealousy at the celebrity obtained by more liberal pursuits than his own. The errors of the great are instructive as their virtues, and the secret history of the outrageous

still preserved at Holkham, the seat of Mr. Coke; and I have also heard of others in the possession of a noble family. Mr. Roscoe whose elegant genius it were desirable should be otherwise directed, is preparing a beautifully embellished catalogue of the Holkham library, in which the taste of the owner will rival his munificence.

A list of those manuscripts to which I allude, may be discovered in the Lambeth MSS. No 943, Art. 369, described in the catalogue as "A note of suc things as were found in a trunk of Sir Edward Coke's by the king's command, 1634," but more particularly in Art. 371, "A Catalogue of Sir Edward Coke's papers then seized and brought to Whitehall."

lawyer may have, at least, the merit of novelty, although not of panegyric.

Coke, already enriched by his first marriage, combined power with added wealth, in his union with the relict of Sir William Hatton, the sister of Thomas, Lord Burleigh. Family alliance was the policy of that prudent age of political interests. Bacon and Cecil married two sisters; Walsingham and Mildmay two others; Knowles Essex, and Leicester, were linked by family alliances. Elizabeth, who never designed to marry herself, was anxious to intermarry her court dependents, and to dispose of them so as to secure their services by family interests *. Ambition and avarice, which had instigated Coke to form this alliance, punished their creature, by mating him with a spirit haughty and intractable as his own. It is a remarkable fact, connected with the character of Coke, that this great lawyer suffered his second marriage to take place in an illegal manner, and condescended to plead ignorance of the laws! He had been married in a private house, without banns or license, at a moment when the archbishop was

* Lloyd's State Worthies, art. *Sir Nicholas Bacon.*

vigilantly prosecuting informal and irregular marriages. Coke, with his habitual pride, imagined that the rank of the parties concerned would have set him above such restrictions; the laws which he administered he appears to have considered had their indulgent exceptions for the great. But Whitgift was a primitive Christian; and the circumstance involved Coke, and the whole family, in a prosecution in the ecclesiastical court, and nearly in the severest of its penalties. The archbishop appears to have been fully sensible of the overbearing temper of this great lawyer; for when Coke became the attorney-general, we cannot but consider, as an ingenious reprimand, the archbishop's gift of a Greek Testament, with this message, that "He had studied the common law long enough, and should henceforward study the law of God."

The atmosphere of a court proved variable with so stirring a genius; and as a constitutional lawyer, Coke, at times, was the stern assertor of the kingly power, or its intrepid impugner; but his personal dispositions led to predominance, and he too often usurped authority and power with the relish of one who loved them too keenly.

"You make the laws too much lean to your opinion, whereby you show yourself to be a legal tyrant," said Lord Bacon, in his admonitory letter to Coke.

In 1616, Coke was out of favour for more causes than one, and his great rival Bacon was paramount at the council table*. Perhaps Coke felt more humiliated by appearing before his judges, who were every one inferior to him as lawyers, than by the weak triumph of his enemies, who received him with studied insult. The queen informed the king of the treatment the disgraced lord chief-justice had experienced, and, in an angry letter, James declared, that "he prosecuted Coke *ad correctionem*, not *ad destructionem*;" and afterwards at the council, spoke of Coke "with so many good words, as if he meant to hang him with a silken halter;" even his rival Bacon made this memorable acknowledgment, in reminding the judges, that "such a man was not every day

* Miss Aikin's Court of James the First appeared two years after this article was written; it has occasioned no alteration. I refer the reader to her clear narrative, ii. p. 30, and p. 63; but secret history is rarely discovered in printed books.

to be found, nor so soon made as marred." When his successor was chosen, the Lord Chancellor Egerton, in administering the oath, accused Coke "of many errors and vanities for his ambitious popularity." Coke, however, lost no friends in this disgrace, nor relaxed his haughtiness; for when the new chief-justice sent to purchase his Collar of S.S., Coke returned for answer, that "he would not part with it, but leave it to his posterity, that they might one day know they had a chief justice to their ancestor*."

In this temporary alienation of the royal smiles Coke attempted their renewal by a project which involved a domestic sacrifice. When the king was in Scotland, and Lord Bacon, as lord-keeper, sat at the head of affairs, his lordship was on ill terms with Secretary Winwood, whom Coke easily persuaded to resume a former proposal for marrying his only daughter to the favourite's

* These particulars I find in the manuscript letters of J. Chamberlain. Sloane MSS. 4173. (1616.) In the quaint style of the times, the common speech run, that Lord Coke had been overthrown by four P's—Pride, Prohibitions, *Præmunire*, and Prerogative. It is only with his moral quality, and not with his legal controversies that his personal character is here concerned.

eldest brother, Sir John Villiers. Coke had formerly refused this match from the high demands of these *parvenus*. Coke, in prosperity, "sticking at ten thousand a year, and resolving to give only ten thousand marks, dropped some idle words, that he would not buy the king's favour too dear;" but now in his adversity, his ambition proved stronger than his avarice, and by this stroke of deep policy the wily lawyer was converting a mere domestic transaction into an affair of state, which it soon became. As such it was evidently perceived by Bacon; he was alarmed at this projected alliance, in which he foresaw that he should lose his hold of the favourite in the inevitable rise once more of his rival Coke. Bacon, the illustrious philosopher, whose eye was only blest in observing nature, and whose mind was only great in recording his own meditations, now sat down to contrive the most subtle suggestions he could put together to prevent this match; but Lord Bacon not only failed in persuading the king to refuse what his majesty much wished, but finally produced the very mischief he sought to avert—a rupture with Buckingham himself, and a copious scolding let-

ter from the king, but a very admirable one*; and where the lord-keeper trembled to find himself called "Mr. Bacon."

There were, however, other personages, than his majesty and his favourite, more deeply concerned in this business, and who had not hitherto been once consulted—the mother and the daughter! Coke, who, in every-day concerns, issued his commands as he would his law-writs, and at times boldly asserted the rights of the subject, had no other paternal notion of the duties of a wife and a child than their obedience!

Lady Hatton, haughty to insolence, had been often forbidden both the courts of their majesties, where Lady Compton, the mother of Buckingham, was the object of her ladyship's persevering contempt. She retained her personal influence by the numerous estates which she enjoyed in right of her former husband. When Coke fell into dis-

* In the Lambeth manuscript, 936, is a letter of Lord Bacon to the king, to prevent the match between Sir John Villiers and Mrs. Coke. Art. 68. Another, Art. 69. The spirited and copious letter of James, "to the Lord Keeper," is printed in "Letters, Speeches, Charges, &c., of Francis Bacon," by Dr. Birch, p. 133.

grace, his lady abandoned him! and, to avoid her husband, frequently moved her residences in town and country. I trace her with malicious activity disfurnishing his house in Holborn, and at Stoke *, seizing on all the plate and moveables, and, in fact, leaving the fallen statesman and the late lord chief-justice, empty houses and no comforter! The wars between Lady Hatton and her husband were carried on before the council-board, where her ladyship appeared, accompanied by an imposing train of noble friends. With her accustomed haughty airs, and in an imperial style, Lady Hatton declaimed against her tyrannical husband, so that the letter-writer adds, "divers said that Burbage could not have acted better." Burbage's famous character was that of Richard the Third. It is extraordinary that Coke, able to defend any cause, bore himself so simply. It is supposed that he had laid his domestic concerns too open to animadversion in

* Stoke-Pogies, in Buckinghamshire; the delightful seat of J. Penn, Esq. It was the scene of "Gray's Long Story," and the chimnies of the ancient house still remain, to mark the locality; a column on which is fixed a statue of Coke, erected by Mr. Penn, consecrates the former abode of its illustrious inhabitant.

the neglect of his daughter; or that he was aware that he was standing before no friendly bar, at that moment being out of favour; whatever was the cause, our noble virago obtained a signal triumph, and "the oracle of law," with all his gravity stood before the council-table hen-pecked. In June, 1616, Sir Edward appears to have yielded at discretion to his lady, for in an unpublished letter I find, that "his curst heart hath been forced to yield to more than he ever meant: but upon this agreement he flatters himself that she will prove a very good wife."

In the following year, 1617, these domestic affairs totally changed. The political marriage of his daughter with Villiers being now resolved on, the business was to clip the wings of so fierce a bird as Coke had found in Lady Hatton, which led to an extraordinary contest. The mother and daughter hated the upstart Villiers, and Sir John, indeed, promised to be but a sickly bridegroom. They had contrived to make up a written contract of marriage with Lord Oxford, which they opposed against the proposal, or rather the order, of Coke.

The violence to which the towering spirits of

the conflicting parties proceeded is a piece of secret history, of which accident has preserved an able memorial. Coke, armed with law, and, what was at least equally potent, with the king's favour, entered by force the barricadoed houses of his lady, took possession of his daughter, on whom he appears never to have cast a thought till she became an instrument for his political purposes, confined her from her mother, and at length got the haughty mother herself imprisoned, and brought her to account for all her past misdoings. Quick was the change of scene, and the contrast was as wonderful. Coke, who, in the preceding year, to the world's surprise, proved so simple an advocate in his own cause in the presence of his wife, now, to employ his own words, "got upon his wings again," and went on as Lady Hatton, when safely lodged in prison, describes, with "his high-handed tyrannical courses," till the furious lawyer occasioned a fit of sickness to the proud crest-fallen lady. "Law! Law! Law!" thundered from the lips of its "oracle;" and Lord Bacon, in his apologetical letter to the king for having opposed his "riot

or violence," says, "I disliked it the more, because he justified it to be law, which was his old song."

The memorial alluded to appears to have been confidentially composed by the legal friend of Lady Hatton, to furnish her ladyship with answers when brought before the council-table. It opens several domestic scenes in the house of that great lord chief-justice; but the forcible simplicity of the style in domestic details will show, what I have often observed, that our language has not advanced in expression since the age of James the First. I have transcribed it from the original, and its interest must plead for its length.

To Lady Hatton.

"Madam, 10th July, 1617.

"Seeing these people speak no language but thunder and lightning, accounting this their cheapest and best way to work upon you, I would with patience prepare myself to their extremities, and study to defend the breaches by which to

their advantage they suppose to come in upon me, and henceforth quit the ways of pacification and composition heretofore, and unseasonably endeavoured, which, in my opinion, lie most open to trouble, scandal, and danger ; wherefore I will briefly set down their objections, and such answers to them as I conceive proper.

"The first is, you conveyed away your daughter from her father. Answer, I had cause to provide for her quiet. Secretary Winwood threatening that she should be married from me in spite of my teeth, and Sir Edward Cook dayly tormenting the girl with discourses tending to bestow her against her liking, which he said she was to submit to his ; besides, my daughter daily complained, and sought to me for help ; whereupon, as heretofore I had accustomed, I bestowed her apart at my cousin-german's house for a few days, for her health and quiet, till my own business for my estate were ended. Sir Edward Coke *never asking me where she was no more than at other times, when at my placing she had been a quarter of a year from him, as the year before with my sister Burley.*

" Second, That you endeavoured to bestow

her, and to bind her to my Lord of Oxford without her knowledge and consent.

" Upon this subject a lawyer, by way of invective, may open his mouth wide, and anticipate every hearer's judgment by the rights of a father; this, dangerous in the president to others; to which, nevertheless, this answer may be justly returned.

" Answer. My daughter, as aforesaid, terrified with her father's threats and hard usage, and pressing me to find some remedy from this violence intended, I did compassionate her condition, and bethought myself of this contract to my Lord of Oxford, if so she liked, and thereupon I gave it to her to peruse and consider by herself, which she did; she liked it, cheerfully writ it out with her own hand, subscribed it, and returned it to me; wherein I did nothing of my own will, but followed her's, after I saw she was so adverse to Sir Thomas Villers, that she voluntarily and deliberately protested that *of all men living she would never have him, nor could ever fancy him for a husband.*

" Secondly. By this I put her in no new way. nor into any other than her father had heretofore

known and approved; for he saw such letters as my Lady of Oxford had writ to me thereabouts; he never forbad it; he never disliked it; only he said they were then too young, and there was time enough for the treaty.

"Thirdly. He always left his daughter to my disposing and my bringing up; knowing that I purposed her my fortune and whole estate, and as upon these reasons he left her to my cares, so *he eased himself absolutely of her, never meddling with her, neglecting her, and caring nothing for her.*

"The third. That you counterfeited a treaty from my Lord of Oxford to yourself.

"Answer. I know it not counterfeit; but be it so, to whose injury? If to my Lord of Oxford's (for no man else is therein interested), it must be either in honour or in freehold. Read the treaty; it proves neither! for it is only a complement; it is no engagement presently nor futurely; besides the law shews what forgery is; and to counterfeit a private man's hand, nay a magistrate's, makes not the fault, but the cause: wherefore.

"Secondly, the end justifies, at the least, excuses, the fact; for it was only *to hold up my*

daughter's mind to her own choice and liking: for her eyes only, and for no other's, that she might see some retribution, and thereby with the more constancy endure her imprisonment, having this only antidote to resist the poison of that place, company, and conversation; myself and all her friends barred from her, and no person nor speech admitted to her ear, but such as spoke Sir Thomas Villers's language.

"The fourth. That you plotted to surprise your daughter to take her away by force, to the breach of the king's peace and particular commandment, and for that purpose had assembled a number of desperate fellows, whereof the consequence might have been dangerous; and the affront to the king was the greater that such a thing was offered, the king being forth of the kingdom, which, by example, might have drawn on other assemblies to more dangerous attempts. This field is large for a plentiful babbler.

"Answer. I know no such matter, neither in any place was their such assembly; true it is I spoke to Turner to provide me some tall fellows for the taking a possession for me, in Lincolnshire, of some lands Sir William Mason had

lately dis-seized me; but be it they were assembled and convoked to such an end, what was done? was any such thing attempted? were they upon the place? kept they the heath or the highways by ambuscades? or was any place, any day, appointed for a rendezvous? No, no such matter, but something was intended; and I pray you what says the law of such a single intention, which is not within the view or notice of the law? Besides, who intended this—the mother? and wherefore? because she *was unnaturally and barbarously secluded from her daughter, and her daughter forced against her will, contrary to her vow and liking,* to the will of him she disliked; nay, the laws of God, of nature, of man, speak for me, and cry out upon them. But they had a warrant from the king's order from the commissioners to keep my daughter in their custody; yet neither this warrant nor the commissioners' did prohibit the mother coming to her, but contrarily allowed her; then by the same authority might she get to her daughter, that Sir Edward Cook had used to keep her from her daughter; the husband having no power, warrant, or permission from God, the king, or the law, to

sequester the mother from her own child, she only endeavouring the child's good, with the child's liking, and to her preferment; and he, his private end against the child's liking, without care of her preferment; which differing respects, as they justify the mother in all, so condemn they the father as a transgressor of the rules of nature, and as a perverter of his rights, as a father and a husband, to the hurt both of child and wife.

"Lastly, if recrimination could lessen the fault, take this in the worst sense, and naked of all the considerable circumstances it hath, what is this, nay, what had the executing of this intention been comparatively with *Sir Edward Cook's most notorious riot, committed at my Lord of Arguyl's house, when without constable or warrant, associated with a dozen fellows well weaponed, without cause being beforehand offered, to have what he would, he took down the doors of the gate-house and of the house itself, and tore the daughter in that barbarous manner from the mother, and would not suffer the mother to come near her; and when he was before the lords of the council to answer this outrage, he justified it to make it good by law, and that he feared the face of no greatness;* a dangerous word

for the encouragement of all notorious and rebellious malefactors; especially from him that had been the chief justice of the law, and of the people reputed the oracle of the law; and a most dangerous bravado cast in the teeth and face of the state in the king's absence, and therefore most considerable for the maintenance of authority and the quiet of the land; for if it be lawful for him with a dozen to enter any man's house thus outrageously for any right to which he pretends, it is lawful for any man with one hundred, nay, with five hundred, and consequently with as many as he can draw together, to do the same, which may endanger the safety of the king's person, and the peace of the kingdom.

"The fifth, that you having certified the king you had received an engagement from my Lord of Oxford, and the king commanding you, upon your allegiance, to come and bring it to him, or to send it him; or not having it, to signify his name to who brought it, and where he was; you refused all, by which you doubled and trebled a high contempt to his majesty.

"Answer. I was so sick on the week before, for the most part I kept my bed, and even that

instant I was so weak as I was not able to rise from it without help, nor to endure the air; which indisposition and weakness my two physicians, Sir William Paddy and Dr. Atkins, can affirm true; which so being, I hope his majesty will graciously excuse the necessity, and not impose a fault, whereof I am not guilty; and for the sending it, I protest to God I had it not; and for telling the parties, and where he is, I most humbly beseech his sacred majesty, in his great wisdom and honour, to consider how unworthy a part it were in me to bring any man into trouble, from which I am so far from redeeming him as I can no way relieve myself, and therefore humbly crave his majesty in his princely consideration of my distressed condition, to forgive me this reservedness, proceeding from that just sense, and the rather, for that the law of the land in civil causes, as I am informed, no way tieth me thereunto."

Among other papers it appears that Coke accused his lady of having "embezzled all his gilt and silver plate and vessell (he having little in any house of mine but that, his marriage with me brought him), and instead thereof foisted in

alkumy of the same sorte, fashion, and use, with the illusion to have cheated him of the other." Coke insists on the inventory by the schedule! Her ladyship says, "I made such plate for matter and form for my own use at Purbeck, that serving well enough in the country; and I was loth to trust such a substance in a place so remote, and in the guard of few; but for the plate and vessell he saith is wanting, they are every ounce within one of my three houses." She complains that Sir Edward Coke and his son Clement had threatened her servants so grievously, that the poor men run away to hide themselves from his fury, and dare not appear abroad. "Sir Edward broke into Hatton House, seased upon my coach and coach-horses, nay, my apparel, which he detains; thrust all my servants out of doors without wages; sent down his men to Corfe to inventory, seize, ship, and carry away all the goods, which being refused him by the castle-keeper, he threats to bring your lordship's warrant for the performance thereof. But your lordship established that he should have the use only of the goods during his life, in such houses as the same appertained, without meaning, I hope,

of depriving me of such use, being goods brought at my marriage, or bought with the money I spared from my allowances. Stop, then, his high tyrannical courses; for I have suffered beyond the measure of any wife, mother, nay, of any ordinary woman in this kingdom, without respect to my father, my birth, my fortunes, with *which I have so highly raised him.*"

What availed the vexation of this sick, mortified, and proud woman, or the more tender feelings of the daughter, in this forced marriage to satisfy the political ambition of the father? When Lord Bacon wrote to the king respecting the strange behaviour of Coke, the king vindicated it, for the purpose of obtaining his daughter, blaming Lord Bacon for some expressions he had used; and Bacon, with the servility of the courtier, when he found the wind in his teeth, tacked round, and promised Buckingham to promote the match he so much abhorred*. Villiers was married to the daughter of Coke at Hampton Court, on Michaelmas Day, 1617—Coke was re-admitted to the council-table—Lady Hatton was reconciled to Lady Comptom and the queen,

* Lambeth MSS. 936. art. 69, and 73.

and gave a grand entertainment on the occasion, to which, however, "the good man of the house was neither invited nor spoken of: he dined that day at the Temple; she is still bent to pull down her husband," adds my informant. The moral close remains to be told. Lady Villiers looked on her husband as the hateful object of a forced union, and nearly drove him mad; while she disgraced herself by such loose conduct as to be condemned to stand in a white sheet, and I believe at length obtained a divorce. Thus a marriage projected by ambition, and prosecuted by violent means, closed with that utter misery to the parties with which it had commenced; and for our present purpose has served to show, that when a lawyer, like Coke, holds his "high-handed tyrannical courses," the law of nature, as well as the law of which he is "the oracle," will be alike violated under his roof.—Wife and daughter were plaintiffs or defendants on whom this lord chief-justice closed his ear: he had blocked up the avenues to his heart with "Law! Law! Law!" his "old song!"

Beyond his eightieth year, in the last parliament of Charles II. the extraordinary vigour of

Coke's intellect flamed clear under the snows of age. No reconciliation ever took place between the parties. On a strong report of his death, her ladyship accompanied by her brother Lord Wimbledon, posted down to Stoke-Pogies to take possession of his mansion; but beyond Colebrook, they met with one of his physicians coming from him with the mortifying intelligence of Sir Edward's amendment, on which they returned at their leisure. This happened in June 1634, and on the following September the venerable sage was no more!

OF COKE'S STYLE, AND HIS CONDUCT.

This great lawyer perhaps set the example of that style of railing and invective at our bar, which the egotism and craven insolence of some of our lawyers include in their practice at the bar. It may be useful to bring to recollection Coke's vituperative style in the following dialogue, so beautiful in its contrast, with that of the great victim before him! The attorney-general had not sufficient evidence to bring the obscure conspiracy home to Rawleigh, with which, I believe, however, he had cautiously tampered. But Coke well knew that James the First had reason to dislike the hero of his age, who was early engaged against the Scottish interests, and betrayed by the ambidexterous policy of Cecil. Coke struck at Rawleigh as a sacrifice to his own political ambition, as we have seen he afterwards immolated his daughter; but his personal hatred was now sharpened by the fine genius and elegant literature of the man; faculties and acquisitions the lawyer so heartily

contemned! Coke had observed, "I know with whom I deal; for we have to deal to-day with a MAN OF WIT."

Coke. Thou art the most vile and execrable traytor that ever lived.

Rawleigh. You speak indiscreetly, barbarously, and uncivilly.

Coke. I want words sufficient to express thy viperous treason.

Rawleigh. I think you want words indeed, for you have spoken one thing half a dozen times.

Coke. Thou art an odious fellow; thy name is hateful to all the realm of England for thy pride.

Rawleigh. It will go near to prove a measuring cast between you and me, Mr. Attorney.

Coke. Well, I will now make it appear to the world, that there never lived a viler viper upon the face of the earth than thou. Thou art a monster; thou hast an English face, but a Spanish heart. Thou viper! for I *thou* thee, thou traitor! Have I angered you?

Rawleigh replied, what his dauntless conduct proved—"I am in no case to be angry*."

* State Trials.

Coke had used the same style with the unhappy favourite of Elizabeth, the Earl of Essex. It was usual with him; the bitterness was in his own heart, as much as in his words; and Lord Bacon has left among his memorandums one entitled, "Of the abuse I received of Mr. Attorney-General publicly in the Exchequer." A specimen will complete our model of his forensic oratory. Coke exclaimed, "Mr. Bacon, if you have any tooth against me, pluck it out; for it will do you more hurt than all the teeth in your head will do you good." Bacon replied, "The less you speak of your own greatness, the more I will think of it." Coke replied, "I think scorn to stand upon terms of greatness towards you, who are less than little, less than the least." Coke was exhibited on the stage, for his ill usage of Rawleigh, as was suggested by Theobald in a note on Twelfth Night. This style of railing was long the privilege of the lawyers; it was revived by Judge Jeffreys; but the bench of judges in the reign of William and Anne taught a due respect even to criminals, who were not supposed to be guilty till they were convicted.

When Coke once was himself in disgrace, his

high spirit sunk without a particle of magnanimity to dignify the fall; his big words, and his "tyrannical courses," when he could no longer exult that "he was upon his wings again," sunk with him as he presented himself on his knees to the council-table. Among other assumptions, he had styled himself "Lord chief-justice of England," when it was declared that this title was his own invention, since he was no more than of the King's Bench. His disgrace was a thunderbolt, which overthrew the haughty lawyer to the roots. When the *supersedeas* was carried to him by Sir George Coppin, that gentleman was surprised on presenting it, to see that lofty "spirit shrunk into a very narrow room, for Coke received it with dejection and tears." The writer from whose letter I have copied these words adds, *O tremor et suspiria non cadunt in fortem et constantem.* The same writer encloses a punning distich: the name of our lord chief-justice was in his day very provocative of the pun both in Latin and English; Cicero indeed had pre-occupied the miserable trifle.

Jus condire Cocus potuit; sed condere jura
Non potuit; potuit condere jura Cocus.

Six years afterwards Coke was sent to the Tower, and then they punned against him in English. An unpublished letter of the day has this curious anecdote: The room in which he was lodged in the Tower had formerly been a kitchen; on his entrance the lord chief-justice read upon the door, "This room wants a Cook!" They twitched the lion in the toils which held him. Shenstone had some reason in thanking Heaven that his name was not susceptible of a pun. This time, however, Coke was "on his wings;" for when Lord Arundel was sent by the king to the prisoner to inform him that he would be allowed "Eight of the best learned in the law to advise him for his cause," our great lawyer thanked the king, "but he knew himself to be accounted to have as much skill in the law as any man in England, and therefore needed no such help, nor feared to be judged by the law."

SECRET HISTORY OF AUTHORS WHO HAVE RUINED THEIR BOOKSELLERS.

Aulus Gellius desired to live no longer than he was able to exercise the faculty of writing; he might have decently added,—and find readers! This would be a fatal wish for that writer who should spread the infection of weariness, without himself partaking of the epidemia. The mere act and habit of writing, without probably even a remote view of publication, has produced an agreeable delirium; and perhaps some have escaped from a gentle confinement by having cautiously concealed those voluminous reveries which remained to startle their heirs; while others again have left a whole library of manuscripts, out of the mere ardour of transcription, collecting and copying with peculiar rapture. I discovered that one of these inscribed this distich on his manuscript collection:

> Plura voluminibus jungenda volumina nostris,
> Nec mihi scribendi terminus ullus erit:

which, not to compose better verses than our original, may be translated,

> More volumes, with our volumes still shall blend;
> And to our writing there shall be no end?

But even great authors have sometimes so much indulged in the seduction of the pen, that they appear to have found no substitute for the flow of their ink, and the delight of stamping blank paper with their hints, sketches, ideas, the shadows of their mind! Petrarch exhibits no solitary instance of this passion of the pen. "I read and I write night and day; it is my only consolation. My eyes are heavy with watching, my hand is weary with writing. On the table where I dine, and by the side of my bed, I have all the materials for writing; and when I awake in the dark, I write, although I am unable to read the next morning what I have written." Petrarch was not always in his perfect senses.

The copiousness and the multiplicity of the writings of many authors, have shown that too many find a pleasure in the act of composition, which they do not communicate to others. Great erudition and every-day application is the calamity of that voluminous author, who, without good

sense, and what is more rare, without that exquisite judgment which we call good taste, is always prepared to write on any subject, but at the same time on no one reasonably. We are astonished at the fertility and the size of our own writers of the seventeenth century, when the theological war of words raged, spoiling so many pages and brains. They produced folio after folio, like almanacks; and Dr. Owen and Baxter wrote more than sixty to seventy volumes, most of them of the most formidable size. The truth is, however, that it was then easier to write up to a folio, than in our days to write down to an octavo; for correction, selection, and rejection, were arts as yet unpractised. They went on with their work, sharply or bluntly, like witless mowers, without stopping to whet their scythes. They were inspired by the scribbling demon of that Rabbin, who, in his oriental style and mania of volume, exclaimed, that were "the heavens formed of paper, and were the trees of the earth pens, and if the entire sea run ink, these only could suffice" for the monstrous genius he was about to discharge on the world. The Spanish Tostatus wrote three times as many leaves as the number of days he

had lived; and of Lope de Vega it is said this calculation came rather short, We hear of another, who was unhappy that his lady had produced twins, from the circumstance that hitherto he had contrived to pair his labours with her own, but that now he was a book behind-hand.

I fix on four celebrated *Scribleri* to give their secret history; our Prynne, Gaspar Barthius, the Abbé de Marolles, and the Jesuit Theophilus Raynaud, who will all show that a book might be written on "authors whose works have ruined their booksellers."

Prynne seldom dined: every three or four hours he munched a manchet, and refreshed his exhausted spirits with ale brought to him by his servant; and when "he was put into this road of writing," as crabbed Anthony telleth, he fixed on "a long quilted cap, which came an inch over his eyes, serving as an umbrella to defend them from too much light;" and then, hunger nor thirst did he experience, save that of his voluminous pages. Prynne has written a library, amounting, I think, to nearly two hundred books. Our unlucky author whose life was involved in authorship, and his happiness, no doubt, in the

habitual exuberance of his pen, seems to have considered the being debarred from pen, ink, and books, during his imprisonment, as an act more barbarous than the loss of his ears. The extraordinary perseverance of PRYNNE in this fever of the pen appears in the following title of one of his extraordinary volumes. "Comfortable Cordials against discomfortable Fears of Imprisonment; containing some Latin Verses, Sentences, and Texts of Scripture, *written by Mr. Wm. Prynne on his Chamber Walls*, in the Tower of London, during his imprisonment there; translated by him into English Verse, 1641." PRYNNE literally verified Pope's description:

> "Is there, who, locked from ink and paper scrawls
> With desperate charcoal round his darkened walls."

We have also a catalogue of printed books, written by Wm. Prynne, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, in these classes,

BEFORE
DURING
and
SINCE
} *his imprisonment,*

with this motto "Jucundi acti labores," 1643. The secret history of this voluminous author

concludes with a characteristic event: a contemporary who saw Prynne in the pillory at Cheapside, informs us that while he stood there they "burnt his huge volumes under his nose, which had almost suffocated him." Yet such was the spirit of party, that a puritanic sister bequeathed a legacy to purchase all the works of Prynne for Sion college, where many still repose; for by an odd fatality, in the fire which burnt that library these volumes were saved, from the idea that folios were the most valuable!

The pleasure which authors of this stamp experience is of a nature which, whenever certain unlucky circumstances combine, positively debarring them from publication, will not abate their ardour one jot; and their pen will still luxuriate in the forbidden page which even booksellers refuse to publish. Many instances might be recorded, but a very striking one is the case of Caspar Barthius, whose "Adversaria," in two volumes folio, are in the collections of the curious.

Barthius was born to literature, for Baillet has placed him among his "Enfans celebres." At nine years of age he recited by heart all the comedies of Terence, without missing a line.

The learned admired the puerile prodigy, while the prodigy was writing books before he had a beard. He became, unquestionably, a student of very extensive literature, modern as well as ancient. Such was his devotion to a literary life, that he retreated from the busy world. It appears that his early productions were composed more carefully and judiciously than his latter ones, when the passion for voluminous writing broke out, which showed itself by the usual prognostic of this dangerous disease—extreme facility of composition, and a pride and exultation in this unhappy faculty. He studied without using collections or references, trusting to his memory, which was probably an extraordinary one, though it necessarily led him into many errors in that delicate task of animadverting on other authors. Writing a very neat hand, his first copy required no transcript; and he boasts that he rarely made a correction: every thing was sent to the press in its first state. He laughs at Statius, who congratulated himself that he employed only two days in composing the epithalamium upon Stella, containing two hundred and seventy-eight hexameters. "This," says Barthius,

" did not quite lay him open to Horace's censure of the man who made two hundred verses in an hour, ' Stans pede in uno.' Not," adds Barthius, " but that I think the censure of Horace too hyperbolical, for I am not ignorant what it is to make a great number of verses in a short time, and in three days I translated into Latin the three first books of the Iliad, which amount to above two thousand verses." Thus rapidity and volume were the great enjoyments of this learned man's pen, and now we must look to the fruits.

Barthius, on the system he had adopted, seems to have written a whole library ; a circumstance which we discover by the continual references he makes in his printed works to his manuscript productions. In the *Index authorum* to his Statius, he inserts his own name, to which is appended a long list of unprinted works, which Bayle thinks by their titles and extracts, conveys a very advantageous notion of them. All these, and many such as these, he generously offered the world, would any bookseller be intrepid or courteous enough to usher them from his press ; but their cowardice or incivility were intractable. The truth is now to be revealed, and seems not

to have been known to Bayle ; the booksellers had been formerly so cajoled and complimented by our learned author, and had heard so much of the celebrated Barthius, that they had caught at the bait, and the two folio volumes of the much-referred-to "Adversaria" of Barthius had thus been published—but from that day no bookseller ever offered himself to publish again !

The "Adversaria" is a collection of critical notes and quotations from ancient authors, with illustrations of their manners, customs, laws, and ceremonies ; all these were to be classed into one hundred and eighty books ; sixty of which we possess in two volumes folio, with eleven indexes. The plan is vast, as the rapidity with which it was pursued : Bayle finely characterizes it by a single stroke—"Its immensity tires even the imagination." But the truth is, this mighty labour turned out to be a complete failure : there was neither order nor judgment in these masses of learning ; crude, obscure, and contradictory ; such as we might expect from a man who trusted to his memory, and would not throw away his time on any correction. His contradictions are flagrant ; but one of his friends would apologize

for these by telling us that "He wrote every thing which offered itself to his imagination; to day one thing, to-morrow another, in order that when he should revise it again, this contrariety of opinion might induce him to examine the subject more accurately." The notions of the friends of authors are as extravagant as those of their enemies. Barthius evidently wrote so much, that often he forgot what he had written, as happened to another great book-man, one Didymus, of whom Quintilian records, that on hearing a certain history, he treated it as utterly unworthy of credit; on which the teller called for one of Didymus's own books, and showed where he might read it at full length! That the work failed, we have the evidence of Clement in his "Bibliotheque curieuse de Livres difficiles à trouver," under the article *Barthius*, where we discover the winding up of the history of this book. Clement mentions more than one edition of the Adversaria; but on a more careful inspection he detected that the old title pages had been removed for others of a fresher date; the booksellers not being able to sell the book practised this deception. It availed little; they remained with

their unsold edition of the two first volumes of the Adversaria, and the author with three thousand folio sheets in manuscript—while both parties complained together, and their heirs could acquire nothing from the works of an author of whom Bayle says that " his writings rise to such a prodigious bulk, that one can scarce conceive a single man could be capable of executing so great a variety ; perhaps no copying clerk, who lived to grow old amidst the dust of an office, ever transcribed as much as this author has written." This was the memorable fate of one of that race of writers who imagine that their capacity extends with their volume. Their land seems covered with fertility, but in shaking their wheat no ears fall.

Another memorable brother of this family of the Scribleri is the Abbé De Marolles, who with great ardour as a man of letters, and in the enjoyment of the leisure and opulence so necessary to carry on his pursuits, from an entire absence of judgment, closed his life with the bitter regrets of a voluminous author; and yet it cannot be denied that he has contributed one precious volume to the public stock of literature;

a compliment which cannot be paid to some who have enjoyed a higher reputation than our author. He has left us his very curious "Memoirs." A poor writer indeed, but the frankness and intrepidity of his character enable him, while he is painting himself, to paint man. Gibbon was struck by the honesty of his pen, for he says in his life, "The dullness of Michael de Marolles and Anthony Wood* acquires some value from the faithful representation of men and manners."

I have elsewhere shortly noticed the Abbé De Marolles in the character of "a literary sinner;" but the extent of his sins never struck me so forcibly as when I observed his delinquencies counted up in chronological order in Niceron's "Hommes illustres." It is extremely amusing to detect the swarming fecundity of his pen; from year to year, with author after author, was this translator wearying others, but remained himself unwearied.

* I cannot subscribe to the opinion that Anthony Wood was a dull man, although he had no particular liking for works of imagination; and used ordinary poets scurvily! An author's personal character is often confounded with the nature of his work. Anthony has sallies at times to which a dull man could not be subject; without the ardour of this hermit of literature, where would be our literary history?

Sometimes two or three classical victims in a season were dragged into his slaughter-house. Of about seventy works, fifty were versions of the classical writers of antiquity, accompanied with notes. But some odd circumstances happened to our extraordinary translator in the course of his life. De L'Etang, a critic of that day, in his "Règles de bien traduire," drew all his examples of bad translation from our abbé, who was more angry than usual, and among his circle the cries of our Marsyas resounded. De L'Etang, who had done this not out of malice, but from urgent necessity to illustrate his principles, seemed very sorry, and was desirous of appeasing the angried translator. One day in Easter, finding the abbé in church at prayers, the critic fell on his knees by the side of the translator: it was an extraordinary moment, and a singular situation to terminate a literary quarrel. "You are angry with me," said L'Etang, "and I think you have reason; but this is a season of mercy, and I now ask your pardon."—"In the manner," replied the abbé, "which you have chosen, I can no longer defend myself. Go, sir! I pardon you." Some days after the abbé again meeting L'Etang, reproached him with duping

him out of a pardon which he had no desire to have bestowed on him. The last reply of the critic was caustic: "Do not be so difficult; when one stands in need of a general pardon, one ought surely to grant a particular one." De Marolles was subject to encounter critics who were never so kind as to kneel by him on an Easter Sunday. Besides these fifty translations, of which the notes are often curious, and even the sense may be useful to consult, his love of writing produced many odd works. His volumes were richly bound, and freely distributed, for they found no readers! In a "Discours pour servir de Preface sur les Poëtes traduits par Michel de Marolles," he has given an imposing list of "illustrious persons and contemporary authors who were his friends," and has preserved many singular facts concerning them. He was, indeed, for so long a time convinced that he had struck off the true spirit of his fine originals, that I find he at several times printed some critical treatise to back his last, or usher in his new version; giving the world reasons why the versions which had been given of that particular author, "Soit en prose, soit en vers ont été si peu approuvées jusqu'ici." Among

these numerous translations he was the first who ventured on the Deipnosophists of Athenæus, which still bears an excessive price. He entitles his work, " Les quinze Livres de Deipnosophistes d'Athenée, Ouvrage delicieux, agreablement diversifié et rempli de Narrations sçavantes sur toutes Sortes de Matières et de Sujets." He has prefixed various preliminary dissertations: yet not satisfied with having performed this great labour, it was followed by a small quarto of forty pages, which might now be considered curious; "Analyse, en Description succincte des Choses contenues dans les quinzes Livres de Deïpnosophistes." He wrote, " Quatrains sur les Personnes de la Cour et les Gens de Lettres," which the curious would now be glad to find. After having plundered the classical geniuses of antiquity by his barbarous style, when he had nothing more left to do, he committed sacrilege in translating the Bible; but, in the midst of printing, he was suddenly stopped by authority, for having inserted in his notes the reveries of the Pre-Adamite Isaac Peyrere. He had already revelled on the New Testament, to his version of which he had prefixed so sensible an introduction, that it was

afterwards translated into Latin. Translation was the mania of the Abbé De Marolles. I doubt whether he ever fairly awoke out of the heavy dream of the felicity of his translations; for late in life I find him observing, "I have employed much time in study, and I have translated many books; considering this rather as an innocent amusement which I have chosen for my private life, than as things very necessary, although they are not entirely useless. Some have valued them, and others have cared little about them; but however it may be, I see nothing which *obliges me to believe that they contain not at least as much good as bad*, both for their own matter and the form which I have given to them." The notion he entertained of his translations was their closeness; he was not aware of his own spiritless style; and he imagined that poetry only consisted in the thoughts, not in the grace and harmony of verse. He insisted that by giving the public his numerous translations, he was not vainly multiplying books, because he neither diminished nor increased their ideas in his faithful versions. He had a curious notion that some were more scrupulous than they ought to be respecting

translations of authors who, living so many ages past, are rarely read from the difficulty of understanding them; and why should they imagine that a translation is injurious to them, or would occasion the utter neglect of the originals? "We do not think so highly of our own works," says the indefatigable and modest Abbé; "but neither do I despair that they may be useful even to these scrupulous persons. I will not suppress the truth, while I am noticing these ungrateful labours; if they have given me much pain by my assiduity, they have repaid me by the fine things they have taught me, and by the opinion which I have conceived that posterity, more just than the present times, will award a more favourable judgment." Thus a miserable translator terminates his long labours, by drawing his bill of fame on posterity which his contemporaries will not pay; but in these cases, as the bill is certainly lost before it reaches acceptance, why should we deprive the drawers of pleasing themselves with the ideal capital?

Let us not, however, imagine that the Abbé De Marolles was nothing but the man he appears in the character of a voluminous translator;

though occupied all his life on these miserable labours, he was evidently an ingenious and nobly-minded man, whose days were consecrated to literary pursuits, and who was among the primitive collectors in Europe of fine and curious prints. One of his works is a "Catalogue des Livres d'Estampes et de Figures en Taille-douce." Paris, 1666, in 8vo. In the preface our author declares, that he had collected one hundred and twenty-three thousand four hundred prints, of six thousand masters, in four hundred large volumes, and one hundred and twenty small ones. This magnificent collection, formed by so much care and skill, he presented to the king; whether gratuitously given, or otherwise, it was an acquisition which a monarch might have thankfully accepted. Such was the habitual ardour of our author, that afterwards he set about forming another collection, of which he has also given a catalogue, in 1672, in 12mo. Both these catalogues of prints are of extreme rarity, and are yet so highly valued by the connoisseurs, that when in France I could never obtain a copy. A long life may be passed without even a sight of

the "Catalogue des Livres d'Estampes" of the Abbé de Marolles*.

Such are the lessons drawn from this secret history of voluminous writers. We see one venting his mania in scrawling on his prison-walls; another persisting in writing folios, while the booksellers, who were once caught like Reynard who had lost his tail, and whom no arts could any longer practise on, turn away from the new trap; and a third, who can acquire no readers but by giving his books away, growing gray in scourging the sacred genius of antiquity by his meagre versions, and dying without having made up his mind, whether he were as woeful a translator as some of his contemporaries had assured him.

Among these worthies of the Scribleri we may

* These two catalogues have always been of extreme rarity and price. Dr. Lister, when at Paris, 1668, notices this circumstance. I have since met with them in the very curious collections of my friend Mr. Douce, who has uniques, as well as rarities. The monograms of our old masters in one of these catalogues are more correct than in some later publications; and the whole plan and arrangement of these catalogues of prints are peculiar and interesting.

rank the Jesuit Theophilus Raynaud, once a celebrated name, eulogised by Bayle and Patin. His collected works fill twenty folios; an edition, indeed, which finally sent the bookseller to the poor-house. This enterprising bibliopolist had heard much of the prodigious erudition of the writer; but he had not the sagacity to discover that other literary qualities were also required to make twenty folios at all saleable. Of these "Opera omnia" perhaps not a single copy can be found in England; but they may be a pennyworth on the continent. Raynaud's works are theological; but a system of grace maintained by one work, and pulled down by another, has ceased to interest mankind: the literature of the divine is of a less perishable nature. Reading and writing through a life of eighty years, and giving only a quarter of an hour to his dinner, with a vigorous memory, and a whimsical taste for some singular subjects, he could not fail to accumulate a mass of knowledge which may still be useful for the curious; and, besides, Raynaud had the Ritsonian characteristic. He was one of those who, exemplary in their own conduct, with a bitter zeal condemn whatever does not agree with

their own notions; and however gentle in their nature, yet will set no limits to the ferocity of their pen. Raynaud was often in trouble with the censors of his books, and much more with his adversaries; so that he frequently had recourse to publishing under a fictitious name. A remarkable evidence of this is the entire twentieth volume of his works. It consists of the numerous writings published anonymously, or to which were prefixed *noms de guerre*. This volume is described by the whimsical title of *Apopompæus;* explained to us as the name given by the Jews to the scape-goat, which, when loaded with all their maledictions on its head, was driven away into the desert. These contain all Raynaud's numerous *diatribes;* for whenever he was refuted, he was always refuting; he did not spare his best friends. The title of a work against Arnauld will show how he treated his adversaries. "Arnauldus redivivus natus Brixiæ seculo xii. renatus in Galliæ ætate nostra." He dexterously applies the name of Arnauld, by comparing him with one of the same name in the twelfth century, a scholar of Abelard's, and a turbulent enthusiast, say the Romish writers, who was burnt alive

for having written against the luxury and the power of the priesthood, and for having raised a rebellion against the pope. When the learned De Launoi had successfully attacked the legends of saints, and was called the *Denicheur de Saints*,—the "Unnicher of Saints," every parish priest trembled for his favourite. Raynaud entitled a libel on this new Iconoclast, "Hercules Commodianus Joannes Launoius repulsus," *&c.*: he compares Launoi to the Emperor Commodus, who, though the most cowardly of men, conceived himself formidable when he dressed himself as Hercules. Another of these maledictions is a tract against Calvanism, described as a "Religio bestiarum," a religion of beasts, because the Calvanists deny free-will; but as he always fired with a double-barrelled gun, under the cloak of attacking Calvanism, he aimed a deadly shot at the Thomists, and particularly at a Dominician friar, whom he considered as bad as Calvin. Raynaud exults that he had driven one of his adversaries to take flight into Scotland, *ad pultes Scoticas transgressus*; to a Scotch pottage; an expression which Saint Jerome used in speaking of Pelagius. He always rendered an ad-

versary odious by coupling him with some odious name. On one of these controversial books where Casalas refuted Raynaud, Monnoye wrote, "Raynaudus et Casalas inepti; Raynaudo tamen Casalas ineptior." The usual termination of what then passed for sense, and now is the reverse!

I will not quit Raynaud without pointing out some of his more remarkable treatises, as so many curiosities of literature.

In a treatise on the attributes of Christ, he entitles a chapter, *Christus bonus, bona, bonum:* in another on the seven-branched candlestick in the Jewish temple, by an allegorical interpretation, he explains the eucharist; and adds an alphabetical list of names and epithets which have been given to this mystery.

The seventh volume bears the general title of *Mariolia:* all the treatises have for their theme the perfections and the worship of the Virgin. Many extraordinary things are here. One is a dictionary of names given to the Virgin, with observations on these names. Another on the devotion of the scapulary, and its wonderful effects, written against De Launoi, and for which the order of the Carmes when he died bestowed

a solemn service and obsequies on him. Another of these "Mariolia" is mentioned by Gallois in the Journal des Sçavans, 1667 as a proof of his fertility: having to preach on the seven solemn anthems which the church sings before Christmas, and which begin by an O! he made this *letter only* the subject of his sermons, and barren as the letter appears, he has struck out "a multitude of beautiful particulars." This literary folly invites our curiosity.

In the eighth volume is a table of saints, classed by their station, condition, employment, and trades; a list of titles and prerogatives, which the councils and the fathers have attributed to the sovereign pontiff.

The thirteenth volume has a subject which seems much in the taste of the sermons on the letter O! it is entitled *Laus Brevitatis!* in praise of brevity. The maxims are brief, but the commentary long. One of the *natural* subjects treated on is that of *Noses:* he reviews a great number of noses, and, as usual, does not forget the Holy Virgin's. According to Raynaud, the nose of the Virgin Mary was long and aquiline, the mark of goodness and dignity; and as Jesus

perfectly resembled his mother, he infers that he must have had such a nose.

A treatise entitled *Heteroclita spiritualia et anomala Pietatis Cœlestium, Terrestrium, et Infernorum,* contains many singular practices introduced into devotion, which superstition, ignorance, and remissness have made a part of religion.

A treatise directed against the new custom of hiring chairs in churches, and being seated during the sacrifice of the mass. Another on the Cæsarean operation, which he stigmatizes as an act against nature. Another on eunuchs. Another entitled *Hipparchus de Religioso Negotiatore,* is an attack on those of his own company; the monk turned merchant: the jesuits were then accused of commercial traffic with the revenues of their establishment. The rector of a college at Avignon, who thought he was portrayed in this honest work, confined Raynaud in prison for five months.

The most curious work of Raynaud, connected with literature, I possess; it is entitled *Erotemata de Malis ac bonis Libris, deque justa aut injusta eorundem confixione. Lugduni,* 1653, 4to. with necessary indexes. One of his works having

been condemned at Rome, he drew up these inquiries concerning good and bad books, addressed to the grand inquisitor. He divides his treatise into " bad and nocent books ; bad books, but not nocent ; books not bad, but nocent ; books neither bad nor nocent." His immense reading appears here to advantage, and his Ritsonian feature is prominent ; for he asserts, that when writing against heretics, all mordacity is innoxious ; and an alphabetical list of abusive names, which the fathers have given to the heterodox, is entitled *Alphabetum bestialitatis hæretici, ex patrum symbolis,*

After all, Raynaud was a man of vast acquirement, with a great flow of ideas, but tasteless, and void of all judgment. An anecdote may be recorded of him, which puts in a clear light the state of these literary men. Raynaud was one day pressing hard a reluctant bookseller to publish one of his works, who replied, " Write a book like Father Barri's, and I shall be glad to print it." It happened that the work of Barri was pillaged from Raynaud, and was much liked, while the original lay on the shelf. However, this only served to provoke a fresh attack from our re-

doubtable hero, who vindicated his rights, and emptied his quiver on him who had been ploughing with his heifer.

Such are the writers who enjoying all the pleasures without the pains of composition, have often apologized for their repeated productions, by declaring that they write only for their own amusement; but such private theatricals should not be brought on the public stage. One Catherinot, all his life was printing a countless number of *feuilles volantes* in history and on antiquities; each consisting of about three or four leaves in quarto: Lenglet du Fresnoy calls him "Grand auteur des petits livres." This gentleman liked to live among antiquaries and historians; but with a crooked head-piece, stuck with whims, and hard with knotty combinations, all overloaded with prodigious erudition, he could not ease it at a less rate than by an occasional dissertation of three or four quarto pages. He appears to have published about two hundred pieces of this sort, much sought after by the curious for their rarity: Brunet complains he could never discover a complete collection. But Catherinot may escape "the pains and penalties"

of our voluminous writers, for De Bure thinks he generously printed them to distribute among his friends. Such endless writers, provided they do not print themselves into an alms-house, may be allowed to print themselves out; and we would accept the apology which Monsieur Catherinot has framed for himself, which I find preserved in *Beyeri Memoriæ Librorum Rariorum.* "I must be allowed my freedom in my studies, for I substitute my writings for a game at the tennis-court, or a club at the tavern; I never counted among my honours these *opuscula* of mine, but merely as harmless amusements. It is my partridge, as with St. John the Evangelist; my cat, as with Pope St. Gregory; my little dog, as with St. Dominick; my lamb, as with St. Francis; my great black mastiff, as with Cornelius Agrippa; and my tame hare, as with Justus Lipsius." I have since discovered in Niceron that this Catherinot could never get a printer, and was rather compelled to study economy in his two hundred quartos of four or eight pages; his paper was of inferior quality; and when he could not get his dissertations into his prescribed number of pages, he used to promise the end at another time,

which did not always happen. But his greatest anxiety was to publish and spread his works ; in despair he adopted an odd expedient. Whenever Monsieur Catherinot came to Paris, he used to haunt the *quaies* where books are sold, and while he appeared to be looking over them, he adroitly slided one of his own dissertations among these old books. He began this mode of publication early, and continued it to his last days. He died with a perfect conviction that he had secured his immortality ; and in this manner had disposed of more than one edition of his unsaleable works. Niceron has given the titles of 118 of his things, which he had looked over.

LOCAL DESCRIPTIONS.

Nothing is more idle, and what is less to be forgiven in a writer, more tedious, than minute and lengthened descriptions of localities; where it is very doubtful whether the writers themselves had formed any tolerable notion of the place they describe,—it is certain their readers never can! These descriptive passages, in which writers of imagination so frequently indulge, are usually a glittering confusion of unconnected things; circumstances recollected from others, or observed by themselves at different times; the finest are thrust in together. If a scene from nature, it is possible that all the seasons of the year may be jumbled together; or if a castle or an apartment, its magnitude or its minuteness may equally bewilder. Yet we find, even in works of celebrity, whole pages of these general or these particular descriptive sketches, which leave nothing behind, but noun substantives propped up by random epithets. The old writers were quite delighted to fill up their voluminous pages with what was a great saving of sense and

thinking. In the Alaric of Scudery sixteen pages, containing nearly five hundred verses, describe a palace, commencing at the *façade*, and at length finishing with the garden; but his description, we may say, was much better described by Boileau, whose good taste felt the absurdity of this "abondance sterile," in overloading a work with useless details,

> Un Auteur quelquefois trop plein de son objet
> Jamais sans l'epuiser n'abandonne un sujet.
> S'il recontre un palais il m'en depeint la face
> Il me promene après de terrasse en terrasse.
> Ici s'offre un perron, là regne un corridor;
> Là ce balcon s'enferme en un balustre d'or;
> Il compte les plafonds, les ronds, et les ovales—
> Je saute vingt feuillets pour en trouver la fin;
> Et je me sauve à peine au travers du jardin!

And then he adds so excellent a canon of criticism, that we must not neglect it:

> Tout ce qu'on dit de trop est fade et rebutant;
> L'Esprit rassasié le rejette à l'instant,
> Qui ne sait se borner, ne sut jamais ecrire.

We have a memorable instance of the inefficiency of local descriptions, in a very remarkable one by a writer of fine genius, composing

with an extreme fondness of his subject, and curiously anxious to send down to posterity the most elaborate display of his own villa—this was the *Laurentinum* of PLINY. We cannot read his letter to Gallus, which the English reader may in Melmoth's elegant version*, without somewhat participating in the delight of the writer in many of its details; but we cannot with the writer form the slightest conception of his villa, while he is leading us over from apartment to apartment, and pointing to us the opposite wing, with a "beyond this," and a "not far from thence," and "to this apartment another of the same sort," *&c.* Yet, still, as we were in great want of a correct knowledge of a Roman villa, and as this must be the most so possible, architects have frequently studied, and the learned translated with extraordinary care, PLINY'S *description of his Laurentinum.* It became so favourite an object, that eminent architects have attempted to raise up this edifice once more, by giving its plan and elevation; and this extraordinary fact is the result—that not one of them but has given a representation different

* Book ii. lett. 17.

from the other! Montfaucon, a more faithful antiquary, in his close translation of the description of this villa, in comparing it with Felibien's plan of the villa itself, observes, "that the architect accommodated his edifice to his translation, but that their notions are not the same; unquestionably," he adds, "if ten skilful translators were to perform their task separately, there would not be one who agreed with another!"

If, then, on this subject of local descriptions, we find that it is impossible to convey exact notions of a real existing scene, what must we think of those which, in truth, describe scenes which have no other existence than the confused makings-up of an author's invention; where the more he details the more he confuses; and where the more particular he wishes to be, the more indistinct the whole appears?

Local descriptions, after a few striking circumstances have been selected, admit of no further detail. It is not their length, but their happiness, which enter into our comprehension; the imagination can only take in and keep together a very few parts of a picture. The pen must not intrude on the province of the pencil, any more than the

pencil must attempt to perform what cannot in any shape be submitted to the eye, though fully to the mind.

The great art, perhaps, of local description, is rather a general than a particular view; the details must be left to the imagination; it is suggestion rather than description. There is an old Italian sonnet of this kind which I have often read with delight; and though I may not communicate the same pleasure to the reader, yet the story of the writer is most interesting, and the lady (for such she was,) has the highest claim to be ranked, like the lady of Evelyn, among *literary wives.*

Francesca Turina Bufalini di Citta di Castello, of noble extraction, and devoted to literature, had a collection of her poems published in 1628: she frequently interpersed little domestic incidents of her female friend—her husband—her son—her grand-children; and in one of these sonnets she has delineated *her palace of San Guistino,* whose localities she appears to have enjoyed with intense delight in the company of "her lord," whom she tenderly associates with

the scene. There is a freshness and simplicity in the description, which will perhaps convey a clearer notion of the spot than even PLINY could do in the voluminous description of his *villa*. She tells us what she found when brought to the house of her husband.

Ampie salle, ampie loggie, ampio cortile
E stanze ornate con gentil pitture,
Trouai giungendo, e nobili sculture
Di Marmo fatte, dà scalpel non vile.
Nobil giardin con un perpetuo Aprile
Di varij fior, di frutti, e di verdure,
Ombre soavi, acque a temprar l'arsure
E strade di beltà non dissimile;
E non men forte ostel, che per fortezza
Ha il ponte, e i fianchi, e lo circonda intorno
Fosso profundo e di real larghezza.
Qui fei col mio Signore dolce soggiorno
Con santo amor, con somma contentezza
Onde ne benedico il mese e il giorno!

Wide halls, wide galleries, and an ample court,
Chambers adorn'd by picture's soothing charm,
I found together blended; noble sculpture
In marble, polished by no chisel vile;
A noble garden, where a lasting April
All various flowers, and fruits, and verdure showers;
Soft shades, and waters tempering the hot air;
And undulating paths in equal beauty!

Nor less, the castled glory stands in force,
And bridged and flanked. And round its circuit winds
The deepened moat, showing a regal size.
Here with my lord I cast my sweet sojourn,
With holy love, and with supreme content;
And hence I bless the month, and bless the day!

MASQUES.

It sometimes happens in the history of national amusements, that a name survives, while the thing itself is forgotten. This has been remarkably the case with our Court Masques, respecting which our most eminent writers long ventured on so many false opinions, with a perfect ignorance of the nature of these compositions, which combined all that was exquisite in the imitative arts of poetry, painting, music, song, dancing, and machinery, at a period when our public theatre was in its rude infancy. Convinced of the miserable state of our represented drama, and not then possessing that more curious knowledge of their domestic history, which we delight to explore, they were led into erroneous notions of one of the most gorgeous, the most fascinating, and the most poetical of dramatic amusements. Our present theatrical exhibitions are indeed on a scale to which the two-penny audiences of the barn-playhouses of Shakespeare could never have strained their sight; and our picturesque and learned

costume, with the brilliant changes of our scenery, would have maddened the "property-men" and the "tire-women" of the Globe or the Red Bull. Shakespeare himself never beheld the true magical illusions of his own dramas, with "Enter the Red Coat," and "Exit Hat and Cloak," helped out with "painted cloths;" or, as a bard of Charles the Second's time chants,—

> Look back and see
> The strange vicissitudes of poetrie:
> Your aged fathers came to plays for wit,
> And sat knee-deep in nut-shells in the pit.

But while the public theatre continued long in this contracted state, without scenes, without dresses, without an orchestra, the court displayed scenical and dramatic exhibitions, with such costly magnificence, such inventive fancy, and such miraculous art, that we may doubt if the combined genius of Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones, and Lawes or Ferobosco, at an æra most favourable to the arts of imagination, has been equalled by the modern *spectacle* of the Opera*.

* Since this article was written, our theatres have attempted several scenes in the style of these Court-Masques, with admirable success in the *machinery*.

But this circumstance had entirely escaped the knowledge of our critics. The critic of a Masque must not only have read it, but he must also have heard, and have viewed it. The only witnesses in this case are those letter-writers of the day, who were then accustomed to communicate such domestic intelligence to their absent friends: from such ample correspondence I have often drawn some curious and sometimes important information. It is amusing to notice the opinions of some great critics, how from an original misstatement they have drawn an illegitimate opinion, and how one inherits from the other, the error which he propagates. Warburton said on Masques, that "Shakespeare was an enemy to these *fooleries*, as appears by his writing none." This opinion was among the many which that singular critic threw out as they arose at the moment; for Warburton forgot that Shakespeare characteristically introduces one in the Tempest's most fanciful scene. Granger, who had not much time to study the manners of the age whose personages he was so well acquainted with, in a note on Milton's Masque, said that "These compositions were trifling and perplexed allegories; the per-

sons of which are fantastical to the last degree. Ben Jonson, in his ' Masque of Christmas,' has introduced ' Minced Pye' and ' Babie Cake,' who act their parts in the drama. But the most *wretched performances* of this kind could please by the help of music, machinery, and dancing." Granger blunders, describing by two farcical characters, a species of composition of which farce was not the characteristic ; such personages as he notices would enter into the ANTI-MASQUE, which was a humorous parody of the more solemn Masque, and sometimes relieved it. Malone, whose fancy was not vivid, condemns Masques and the age of Masques, in which he says, echoing Granger's epithet, " the *wretched taste* of the times found amusement." And lastly comes Mr. Todd, whom the splendid fragment of the " Arcades," and the entire Masque which we have by heart, could not warm ; while his neutralising criticism fixes him at the freezing point of the thermometer. " This dramatic entertainment, performed not without prodigious expense in machinery and decoration, to *which humour* we certainly owe the entertainment of ' Arcades,' and the inimitable Mask of Comus." Comus,

however, is only a fine dramatic poem, retaining scarcely any features of the Masque. The only modern critic who had written with some research on this departed elegance of the English drama was Warton, whose fancy responded to the fascination of the fairy-like magnificence and lyrical spirit of the Masque. Warton had the taste to give a specimen from "The Inner Temple Mask. by William Browne," the pastoral poet, whose address to Sleep, he observed, "reminds us of some favourite touches in Milton's Comus, to which it perhaps gave birth." Yet even Warton was deficient in that sort of research, which only can discover the true nature of these singular dramas.

Such was the state in which some years ago I found all our knowledge of this once favourite amusement of our court, our nobility, and our learned bodies of the four inns of court. Some extensive researches, pursued among contemporary manuscripts, cast a new light over this obscure child of fancy and magnificence. I could not think lightly of what Ben Jonson has called "The eloquence of masques;"—entertainments on which three to five thousand pounds were

expended, and on more public occasions ten and twenty thousand. To the aid of the poetry, composed by the finest poets, came the most skilful musicians, and the most elaborate mechanists; Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones and Lawes, blended into one piece their respective genius; and Lord Bacon and Whitelocke and Selden, who sat in committees for the last great Masque presented to Charles the First, invented the devices; composed the procession of the Masquers and the Anti-Masquers; while one took the care of the dancing or the brawlers, and Whitelocke the music;—the sage Whitelocke! who has chronicled his self-complacency on this occasion, by claiming the invention of a *Coranto*, which for thirty years afterwards was the delight of the nation, and was blessed by the name of "Whitelocke's Coranto," and which was always called for, two or three times over, whenever that great statesman "came to see a play* !" So much personal honour was considered to be involved in the conduct of a Masque, that even this committee of illustrious

* The music of Whitelocke's Coranto is preserved in "Hawkins's History of Music;" might it be restored for the ladies as a waltz?

men was on the point of being broken up by too serious a discussion concerning precedence; and the Masque had nearly not taken place, till they hit on the expedient of throwing dice to decide on their rank in the procession! On this jealousy of honour in the composition of a Mask, I discovered, what hitherto had escaped the knowledge, although not the curiosity, of literary inquirers;—the occasion of the memorable enmity between Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, who had hitherto acted together with brotherly affection; "a circumstance," says Mr. Gifford, to whom I communicated it, "not a little important in the history of our calumniated poet." The trivial cause, but not so in its consequences, was the poet prefixing his own name before that of the architect, on the title-page of a Masque, which hitherto had only been annexed; so jealous was the great architect of his *part* of the Masque, and so predominant his power and name at court, that he considered his rights invaded by the *inferior* claims of the poet! Jonson has poured out the whole bitterness of his soul, in two short satires: still more unfortunately for the subject of these satires, they provoked Inigo

to sharpen his pen on rhyme ; but it is edgeless, and the blunt composition still lies in its manuscript state.

While these researches had engaged my attention, appeared Mr. Gifford's Memoirs of Ben Jonson. The characteristics of masques are there, for the first time, elaborately opened with the clear and penetrating spirit of that ablest of our dramatic critics. I feel it like presumption to add to what has received the finishing hand of a master ; but his jewel is locked up in a chest, which I fear is too rarely opened, and he will allow me to borrow something from its splendour. " The Masque, as it attained its highest degree of excellence, admitted of dialogue, singing, and dancing ; these were not independent of one another, but combined, by the introduction of some ingenious fable, into an harmonious whole. When the plan was formed, the aid of the sister-arts was called in ; for the essence of the masque was pomp and glory. Moveable scenery of the most costly and splendid kind was lavished on the masque ; the most celebrated masters were employed on the songs and dances ; and all that the kingdom afforded of vocal and instrumental

excellence was employed to embellish the exhibition. Thus magnificently constructed, the masque was not committed to ordinary performers. It was composed, as Lord Bacon says, for princes, and by princes it was played. Of these masques, the skill with which their ornaments were designed, and the inexpressible grace with which they were executed, appear to have left a vivid impression on the mind of Jonson. His genius awakes at once, and all his faculties attune to sprightliness and pleasure. He makes his appearance, like his own DELIGHT, 'accompanied with Grace, Love, Harmony, Revel, Sport, and Laughter.'

> "In curious knot and mazes so
> The spring at first was taught to go;
> And Zephyr, when he came to woo
> His Flora had his *motions** too;
> And thus did Venus learn to lead
> The Idalian brawls, and so to tread,
> As if the wind, not she, did walk,
> Nor press'd a flower, nor bow'd a stalk.

And in what was the taste of the times *wretched?*" continues Mr. Gifford, in reply to Messieurs

* The figures and actions of dancers in masques were called MOTIONS.

Malone, and the rest, who had never cast even an imperfect glance on what one of the completest gentlemen of that age has called "The courtly recreations of gallant gentlemen and ladies of honour, striving to exceed one the other in their measures and changes, and in their repast of wit, which have been beyond the power of Envy to disgrace." But in what was "the taste of the times *wretched?* In poetry, painting, architecture, they have not since been equalled; and it ill becomes us to arraign the taste of a period which possessed a cluster of writers of whom the meanest would now be esteemed a prodigy." I have been carried farther in this extract than I intended, by the force of the current, which hurries Malone down from our sight, who, fortunately for his ease, did not live to read this denouncement for his objection against masques, as "bungling shows;" and which Warburton treats as "fooleries;" Granger as "wretched performances;" while Mr. Todd regards them merely as "the humour of the times!"

Masques were often the private theatricals of the families of our nobility, performed by the ladies and gentlemen at their seats; and were

splendidly got up on certain occasions; such as the celebration of a nuptial, or in compliment to some great visitor. The Mask of Comus was composed by Milton to celebrate the creation of Charles the First as Prince of Wales; a scene in this Mask presented both the castle and the town of Ludlow, which proves, that although our small public theatres had not yet displayed any of the scenical illusions which long afterwards Davenant introduced, these scenical effects existed in great perfection in the Masques. The minute descriptions introduced by Thomas Campion in his "Memorable Mask," as it is called, will convince us that the scenery must have been exquisite and fanciful, and that the poet was always a watchful and anxious partner with the machinist; with whom sometimes, however, he had a quarrel.

The subject of this very rare mask was "The Night and the Hours." It would be tedious to describe the first scene with the fondness with which the poet has dwelt on it. It was a double valley; one side, with dark clouds hanging before it; on the other, a green vale, with trees, and nine golden ones of fifteen feet high; from which grove, to-

wards "the State," or the seat of the king, was a broad descent to the dancing-place: the bower of Flora was on the right, the house of Night on the left; between them a hill, hanging like a cliff over the grove. The bower of Flora was spacious, garnished with flowers, and flowery branches, with lights among them; the house of Night ample and stately, with black columns studded with golden stars; within, nothing but clouds and twinkling stars; while about it were placed, on wire, artificial bats and owls, continually moving. As soon as the king entered the great hall, the hautboys, out of the wood on the top of the hill, entertained the time, till Flora and Zephyr were seen busily gathering flowers from the bower, throwing them into baskets which two silvans held, attired in changeable taffaty. The song is light as their fingers, but the burthen is charming:

Now hath Flora robb'd her bowers
To befriend this place with flowers;
  Strow about! strow about!
Divers, divers flowers affect
For some private dear respect;
  Strow about! strow about!
But he's none of Flora's friend
That will not the rose commend
  Strow about! strow about!

I cannot quit this masque, of which collectors know the rarity, without preserving one of those Doric delicacies, of which, perhaps, we have outlived the taste! It is a playful dialogue between a SILVAN and an HOUR, while NIGHT appears in her house, with her long black hair spangled with gold, amidst her HOURS; their faces black, and each bearing a lighted black torch.

SILVAN. Tell me, gentle Hour of Night,
Wherein dost thou most delight?
HOUR. Not in sleep!
SILVAN. Wherein then?
HOUR. In the frolic view of men!
SILVAN. Lov'st thou music?
HOUR. Oh! 'tis sweet!
SILVAN. What's dancing?
HOUR. E'en the mirth of feet.
SILVAN. Joy you in fairies and in elves?
HOUR. We are of that sort ourselves!
But, Silvan! say, why do you love
Only to frequent the grove?
SILVAN. Life is fullest of content
When delight is innocent.
HOUR. Pleasure must vary, not be long;
Come then, let's close, and end the song!

That the moveable scenery of these masques formed as perfect a scenical illusion as any that our own age, with all its perfection of decora-

tion, has attained to, will not be denied by those who have read the few masques which have been printed. They usually contrived a double division of the scene; one part was for some time concealed from the spectator, which produced surprise and variety. Thus, in the Lord's Mask at the marriage of the Palatine, the scene was divided into two parts from the roof to the floor; the lower part being first discovered, there appeared a wood in perspective, the innermost part being of "releave or whole round," the rest painted. On the left a cave, and on the right a thicket, from which issued Orpheus. At the back part of the scene, at the sudden fall of a curtain, the upper part broke on the spectators, a heaven of clouds of all hues; the stars suddenly vanished, the clouds dispersed; an element of artificial fire played about the house of Prometheus—a bright and transparent cloud, reaching from the heavens to the earth, whence the eight maskers descending with the music of a full song; and at the end of their descent the cloud broke in twain, and one part of it, as with a wind, was blown athwart the scene. While this cloud was vanishing, the wood, being the under part of the scene,

was insensibly changing: a perspective view opened, with porticoes on each side, and female statues of silver, accompanied with ornaments of architecture, filling the end of the house of Prometheus, and seemed all of goldsmiths' work. The women of Prometheus descended from their niches, till the anger of Jupiter turned them again into statues. It is evident, too, that the size of the proscenium, or stage, accorded with the magnificence of the scene; for I find choruses described, "and changeable conveyances of the song," in manner of an echo, performed by more than forty different voices and instruments in various parts of the scene. The architectural decorations were the pride of Inigo Jones; such could not be trivial.

"I suppose," says the writer of this mask, "few have ever seen more neat artifice than Master Inigo Jones showed in contriving their motion; who, as all the rest of the workmanship which belonged to the whole invention, showed extraordinary industry and skill, which if it be not as lively expressed in writing as it appeared in view, rob not him of his due, but lay the blame on my want of right apprehending his instructions,

for the *adoring* of his art." Whether this strong expression should be only *adorning* does not appear in any errata; but the feeling of admiration was fervent among the spectators of that day, who were at least as much astonished as they were delighted. Ben Jonson's prose descriptions of scenes in his own exquisite masques, as Mr. Gifford observes, "are singularly bold and beautiful." In a letter, which I discovered, the writer of which had been present at one of these masques, and which Mr. Gifford has preserved*, the reader may see the great poet anxiously united with Inigo Jones in working the machinery. Jonson, before "a sacrifice could be performed, turned the globe of the earth, standing behind the altar." In this globe, "the sea was expressed heightened with silver waves, which stood, or rather hung (for no axle was seen to support it), and *turning softly*, discovered the first masque †." *&c.* This "turning softly" producing a very magical effect, the great poet would trust to no other hand but his own!

It seems, however, that as no masque-writer

* Memoirs of Jonson, p. 88.

† See Gifford's Jonson, vol. vii. p. 78.

equalled Jonson, so no machinist rivalled Inigo Jones. I have sometimes caught a groan from some unfortunate poet, whose beautiful fancies were spoilt by the bungling machinist. One says, "The *order of this scene* was carefully and ingeniously disposed, and as happily put in act (for the *motions*) by the king's master carpenter;" but he adds, "the *painters*, I must needs say (not to belie them), lent small colour to any, to attribute much of the spirit of these things to their pencil." Poor Campion, in one of his masques, describing where the trees were gently to sink, *&c.*, by an engine placed under the stage, and in sinking were to open, and the masquers appear out at their tops, *&c.*, adds this vindictive marginal note: "Either by the *simplicity*, *negligence*, or *conspiracy* of the *painter*, the passing away of the trees was somewhat hazarded, though the same day they had been shown with much admiration, and were left together to the same night;" that is, they were worked right at the rehearsal, and failed in the representation, which must have perplexed the nine masquers on the tops of these nine trees. But such accidents were only vexations crossing the fan-

cies of the poet: they did not essentially injure the magnificence, the pomp, and the fairy world opened to the spectators. So little was the character of these MASQUES known, that all our critics seemed to have fallen into repeated blunders, and used the MASQUE as Campion suspected his painters to have done, "either by simplicity, negligence, or conspiracy." Hurd, a cold systematic critic, thought he might safely prefer the masque in the Tempest, as "putting to shame all the masques of Jonson, not only in its *construction*, but in the *splendour* of its show;"—"which," adds Mr. Gifford, "was danced and sung by the ordinary performers to a couple of fiddles, perhaps in the balcony of the stage." Such is the fate of criticism without knowledge! And now, to close our MASQUES, let me apply the forcible style of Ben Jonson himself: "The glory of all these solemnities had perished like a blaze, and gone out in the beholders' eyes; so short-lived are the bodies of all things in comparison of their souls!"

OF DES MAIZEAUX, AND THE SECRET HISTORY OF ANTHONY COLLINS'S MANUSCRIPTS.

Des Maizeaux was an active literary man of his day, whose connexions with Bayle, St. Evremond, Locke, and Toland, with his name set off by an F.R.S., have occasioned the dictionary-biographers to place him prominently among their "hommes illustres." Of his private history nothing seems known. Having something important to communicate respecting one of his friends, a far greater character, with whose fate he stands connected, even Des Maizeaux becomes an object of our inquiry.

He was one of those French refugees, whom political madness, or despair of intolerance, had driven to our shores. The proscription of Louis XIV., which supplied us with our skilful workers in silk, also produced a race of the unemployed, who proved not to be as exquisite in the handicraft of book-making; such were *Motteux, La Coste, Ozell, Durand,* and others. Our author had come over in that tender state of

youth, just in time to become half an Englishman: and he was so ambidextrous in the languages of the two great literary nations of Europe, that whenever he took up his pen, it is evident, by his manuscripts, which I have examined, that it was mere accident which determined him to write in French or in English. Composing without genius, or even taste, without vivacity or force, the simplicity and fluency of his style were sufficient for the purposes of a ready dealer in all the *minutiæ literariæ ;* literary anecdotes, curious quotations, notices of obscure books, and all that *supellex* which must enter into the history of literature, without forming a history. These little things, which did so well of themselves, without any connexion with any thing else, became trivial when they assumed the form of voluminous minuteness; and Des Maizeaux at length imagined that nothing but anecdotes were necessary to compose the lives of men of genius ! With this sort of talent he produced a copious life of Bayle, in which he told every thing he possibly could ; and nothing can be more tedious, and more curious : for though it be a grievous fault to omit nothing, and marks the writer to be deficient in the development

of character, and that sympathy which throws inspiration over the vivifying page of biography, yet, to admit every thing has this merit—that we are sure to find what we want! Warburton poignantly describes our Des Maizeaux, in one of those letters to Dr. Birch, which he wrote in the fervid age of study, and with the impatient vivacity of his genius. "Almost all the life-writers we have had before Toland and Des Maizeaux are indeed strange, insipid creatures; and yet I had rather read the worst of them, than be obliged to go through with this of Milton's, or the other's life of Boileau; where there is such a dull, heavy succession of long quotations of uninteresting passages, that it makes their method quite nauseous. But the verbose, tasteless Frenchman, seems to lay it down as a principle, that every life must be a book,—and, what is worse, it seems a book without a life; for what do we know of Boileau, after all his tedious stuff?"

Des Maizeaux was much in the employ of the Dutch booksellers, then the great monopolizers in the literary mart of Europe. He supplied their "nouvelles litteraires" from England; but the work-sheet price was very mean in those days.

I have seen annual accounts of Des Maizeaux settled to a line, for four or five pounds; and yet he sent the "Novelties" as fresh as the post could carry them! He held a confidential correspondence with these great Dutch booksellers, who consulted him in their distresses; and he seems rather to have relieved them than himself. But if he got only a few florins at Rotterdam, the same "nouvelles litteraires" sometimes secured him valuable friends at London; for in those days, which perhaps are returning on us, an English author would often appeal to a foreign journal for the commendation he might fail in obtaining at home; and I have discovered, in more cases than one, that, like other smuggled commodities, the foreign article was often of home-manufactory!

I give one of these curious bibliopolical distresses. Sauzet, a bookseller at Rotterdam, who judged too critically for the repose of his authors, seems to have been always fond of projecting a new "Journal;" tormented by the ideal excellence which he had conceived of such a work, it vexed him that he could never find the workmen! Once disappointed of the assistance he expected

from a writer of talents, he was fain to put up with one he was ashamed of; but warily stipulated on very singular terms. He confided this precious literary secret to Des Maizeaux. I translate from his manuscript letter.

" I send you, my dear Sir, four sheets of the continuation of my journal, and I hope this second part will turn out better than the former. The author thinks himself a very able person; but I must tell you frankly, that he is a man without erudition, and without any critical discrimination; he writes pretty well, and turns passably what he says; but that is all! Monsieur Van Effen having failed in his promises to realize my hopes on this occasion, necessity compelled me to have recourse to him; but for *six months only*, and on condition that he should not, on any account whatever, *allow any one to know that he is the author of the journal;* for his *name* alone would be sufficient to make even a passable book discreditable. As you are among my friends, I will confide to you in secrecy the name of this author; it is Monsr. *De Limiers**. You see how

* *Van Effen* was a Dutch writer of some merit, and one of a literary knot of ingenious men, consisting of Sallengre,

much my interest is concerned that the author should not be known!" This anecdote is gratuitously presented to the editors of certain reviews, as a serviceable hint to enter into the same engagement with some of their own writers; for it is usually the *De Limiers* who expend their last puff in blowing their own name about the town.

In England, Des Maizeaux, as a literary man, made himself very useful to other men of letters, and particularly to persons of rank; and he found patronage and a pension,—like his talents, very moderate! A friend to literary men, he

St. Hyacinthe, Prosper Marchand, *&c.*, who carried on a smart review for those days, published at the Hague under the title of "Journal Litteraire." They all composed in French; and Van Effen gave the first translations of our Guardian, Robinson Crusoe, and the Tale of a Tub, *&c.* He did something more, but not better; he attempted to imitate the Spectator, in his "Le Misanthrope," 1726, which exhibits a picture of the uninteresting manners of a nation, whom he could not make very lively.

De Limiers has had his name slipped into our biographical dictionaries. An author cannot escape the fatality of the alphabet; his numerous misdeeds are registered. It is said, that if he had not been so hungry, he would have given proofs of possessing some talent.

lived amongst them, from "Orator" Henley, up to Addison, Lord Halifax, and Anthony Collins. I find a curious character of our Des Maizeaux in the hand-writing of Edward, Earl of Oxford, to whose father (Pope's Earl of Oxford) and himself, the nation owes the Harleian treasures. His lordship is a critic with high Tory principles, and high-church notions. "This Des Maizeaux is a great man with those who are pleased to be called *Freethinkers*, particularly with Mr. Anthony Collins, collects passages out of books for their writings. His life of Chillingworth is wrote to please that set of men." The secret history I am to unfold relates to Anthony Collins and Des Maizeaux. Some curious book-lovers will be interested in the personal history of an author they are well acquainted with, yet which has hitherto remained unknown. He tells his own story in a sort of epistolary petition he addressed to a noble friend characteristic of an author, who cannot be deemed unpatronised, yet whose name, after all his painful labours, might be inserted in my "Calamities of Authors."

In this letter he announces his intention of publishing a dictionary like Bayle; having writ-

ten the life of Bayle, the next step was to become himself a Bayle; so short is the passage of literary delusion! He had published, as a specimen, the lives of Hales and Chillingworth. He complains that his circumstances have not allowed him to forward that work, nor digest the materials he had collected.

"A work of that nature requires a steady application, free from the cares and avocations incident to all persons obliged to seek for their maintenance. I have had the misfortune to be in the case of those persons, and am now reduced to a pension on the Irish establishment, which, deducting the tax of four shillings in the pound, and other charges, brings me in about £40 a year of our English money*. This pension was granted to me in 1710, and I owe it chiefly to the friendship of Mr. Addison, who was then secretary to the Earl of Wharton, lord lieutenant of Ireland. In 1711, 12, and 14, I was appointed one of the commissioners of the lottery by the interest of Lord Hallifax.

"And this is all I ever received from the government, though I had some claim to the royal favour; for in 1710, when the enemies to our constitution were contriving its ruin, I wrote a pamphlet entitled 'Lethe,' which was published in Holland, and afterwards translated into English, and twice

* I find that the nominal pension was 3*s.* 6*d.* per diem on the Irish civil list, which amounts to above £63 per annum. If a pension be granted for reward, it seems a mockery that the income should be so grievously reduced, which cruel custom still prevails.

printed in London; and being reprinted at Dublin proved so offensive to the ministry in Ireland, that it was burnt by the hands of the hangman. But so it is, that after having showed on all occasions my zeal for the royal family, and endeavoured to make myself serviceable to the public by several books published; after forty years' stay in England, and in an advanced age, I find myself and family destitute of a sufficient livelihood, and suffering from complaints in the head and impaired sight by constant application to my studies.

"I am confident, my lord," he adds, "that if the queen, to whom I was made known on occasion of Thuanus's French translation, were acquainted with my present distress, she would be pleased to afford me some relief*."

Among the confidential literary friends of Des Maizeaux he had the honour of ranking Anthony Collins, a great lover of literature, and a man of fine genius; and who in a continued correspondence with our Des Maizeaux treated him as his friend, and employed him as his agent in his literary concerns. These in the formation of an extensive library, were in a state of perpetual activity, and Collins was such a true lover of his

* This letter, or petition, was written in 1732. In 1743 he procured his pension to be placed on his wife's life, and he died in 1745.

He was sworn in as gentleman of his majesty's privy chamber in 1722.—Sloane's MSS. 4289.

books, that he drew up the catalogue with his own pen*. Anthony Collins wrote several well-known works without prefixing his name; but having pushed too far his curious inquiries on some obscure and polemical points, he incurred the odium of a *free-thinker*, a term which then began to be in vogue, and which the French adopted by translating it in their way, *a strong thinker*, or *esprit fort*. Whatever tendency to "liberalise" the mind from *dogmas* and *creeds* prevails in these works, the talents and learning of Collins were of the first class. His morals were immaculate, and his personal character independent; but the *odium theologicum* of those days contrived every means to stab in the dark, till the taste became hereditary with some. I shall mention a fact of this cruel bigotry which occurred within my own observation on one of the most polished men of the age. The late Mr. Cumberland, in the romance entitled his "Life," gave this extraordinary fact, that Dr. Bentley, who so ably replied by his "Remarks," under the name of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, to Collins's "Discourse on Free-thinking," when many years after

* There is a printed catalogue of his library.

he discovered him fallen into great distress, conceiving that by having ruined Collins's character as a writer for ever, he had been the occasion of his personal misery, he liberally contributed to his maintenance. In vain I mentioned to that elegant writer, who was not curious about facts, that this person could never have been *Anthony* Collins, who had always a plentiful fortune; and when it was suggested to him that this "A. Collins," as he printed it, must have been *Arthur* Collins the historical compiler, who was often in pecuniary difficulties, still he persisted in sending the lie down to posterity, *totidem verbis*, without alteration in his second edition, observing to a friend of mine, that "the story, while it told well, might serve as a striking instance of his great relative's generosity; and that *it should stand*, because it could do no harm to any but to *Anthony* Collins, whom he considered as little short of an atheist." So much for this pious fraud! but be it recollected that this Anthony Collins was the confidential friend of Locke, of whom Locke said, on his dying bed, that "Collins was a man whom he valued in the first rank of those that he left behind him." And the last words of Collins on his

own death-bed were, that "he was persuaded he was going to that place which God had designed for them that love him." The cause of true religion will never be assisted by using such leaky vessels as *Cumberland's* wilful calumnies, which in the end must run out, and be found, like the present, mere empty fictions!

An extraordinary circumstance occurred on the death of ANTHONY COLLINS. He left behind him a considerable number of his own manuscripts, and there was one collection formed into eight octavo volumes; but that they might be secured from the common fate of manuscripts, he bequeathed them all, and confided them to the care of our DES MAIZEAUX. The choice of COLLINS reflects honour on the character of DES MAIZEAUX, yet he proved unworthy of it! He suffered himself to betray his trust, practised on by the earnest desire of the widow, and perhaps by the arts of a Mr. Tomlinson, who appears to have been introduced into the family by the recommendation of Dean Sykes, whom at length he supplanted, and whom the widow, to save her reputation, was afterwards obliged to discard*.

* This information is from a note found among Des Maizeaux's papers; but its truth I have no means to ascertain.

In an unguarded moment he relinquished this precious *legacy of the manuscripts*, and accepted *fifty guineas as a present*. But if Des Maizeaux lost his honour in this transaction, he was at heart an honest man, who had swerved for a single moment; his conscience was soon awakened, and he experienced the most violent compunctions. It was in a paroxysm of this nature that he addressed the following letter to a mutual friend of the late Anthony Collins and himself.

Sir, *January* 6, 1730.

I am very glad to hear you are come to town, and as you are my best friend, now I have lost Mr. Collins, give me leave to open my heart to you, and to beg your assistance in an affair which highly concerns both Mr. Collins's (your friend) and my own honour and reputation. The case, in few words, stands thus: Mr. Collins by his last will and testament left me his manuscripts. Mr. Tomlinson, who first acquainted me with it, told me that Mrs. Collins should be glad to have them, and I made them over to her; whereupon she was pleased to present me with fifty guineas. I desired her at the same time to take care they should be kept safe and unhurt, which she promised to do. This was done the 25th of last month. Mr. Tomlinson, who managed all this affair, was present.

Now, having further considered that matter, I find that I have done a most wicked thing. I am persuaded that I have betrayed the trust of a person who for 26 years has given me continual instances of his friendship and confidence. I am convinced that I have acted contrary to the will and intention

of my dear deceased friend; showed a disregard to the particular mark of esteem he gave me on that occasion; in short, that I have forfeited what is dearer to me than my own life—honour and reputation.

These melancholy thoughts have made so great an impression upon me, that I protest to you I can enjoy no rest; they haunt me every where, day and night. I earnestly beseech you, Sir, to represent my unhappy case to Mrs. Collins. I acted with all the simplicity and uprightness of my heart; I considered that the MSS. would be as safe in Mrs. Collins's hands as in mine; that she was no less obliged to preserve them than myself; and that, as the library was left to her, they might naturally go along with it. Besides, I thought I could not too much comply with the desire of a lady to whom I have so many obligations. But I see now clearly that this is not fulfilling Mr. Collins's will, and that the duties of our conscience are superior to all other regards. But it is in her power to forgive and mend what I have done imprudently, but with a good intention. Her high sense of virtue and generosity will not, I am sure, let her take any advantage of my weakness; and the tender regard she has for the memory of the best of men, and the tenderest of husbands, will not suffer that his intentions should be frustrated, and that she should be the instrument of violating what is most sacred. If our late friend had designed that his MSS. should remain in her hands, he would certainly have left them to her by his last will and testament; his acting otherwise is an evident proof that it was not his intention.

All this I proposed to represent to her in the most respectful manner; but you will do it infinitely better than I can in this present distraction of mind; and I flatter myself that

the mutual esteem and friendship which has continued so many years between Mr. Collins and you, will make you readily embrace whatever tends to honour his memory.

I send you the fifty guineas I received, which I do now look upon as the wages of iniquity; and I desire you to return them to Mrs. Collins, who, as I hope it of her justice, equity, and regard to Mr. Collins's intentions, will be pleased to cancel my paper.

I am, &c.,

P. Des Maizeaux.

The manuscripts were never returned to Des Maizeaux; for seven years afterwards Mrs. Collins, who appears to have been a very spirited lady, addressed to him the following letter on the subject of a report, that she had permitted transcripts of these very manuscripts to get abroad. This occasioned an animated correspondence from both sides.

Sir, *March* 10, 1736-7.

I have thus long waited in expectation that you would ere this have called on Dean Sykes, as Sir B. Lucy said you intended, that I might have had some satisfaction in relation to a very unjust reproach, *viz.*, that I, or somebody that I had trusted, had *betrayed* some of the transcripts, or MSS., of Mr. Collins into the Bishop of London's hands. I cannot therefore, since you have not been with the dean as was desired, but call on you in this manner, to know what authority you had for such a reflection; or on what grounds

you went on for saying that these transcripts are in the Bishop of London's hands. I am determined to trace out the grounds of such a report; and you can be no friend of mine, no friend of Mr. Collins, no friend to common justice, if you refuse to acquaint me what foundation you had for such a charge. I desire a very speedy answer to this, who am, Sir,

Your servant,

ELIZ. COLLINS.

To Mr. Des Maizeaux, at his lodgings next door to the Quakers' burying-ground, Hanover-street, out of Long Acre.

To Mrs. Collins.

March 14, 1737.

I had the honour of your letter of the 10th inst. and as I find that something has been misapprehended, I beg leave to set this matter right.

Being lately with some honourable persons, I told them it had been reported that some of Mr. C.'s MSS. were fallen into the hands of strangers, and that I should be glad to receive from you such information as might enable me to disprove that report. What occasioned this surmise, or what particular MSS. were meant, I was not able to discover; so I was left to my own conjectures, which, upon a serious consideration, induced me to believe that it might relate to the MSS. in eight volumes in 8vo. of which there is a transcript. But as the original and the transcript are in your possession, if you please, madam, to compare them together, you may easily see whether they be both entire and perfect, or whether there be any thing wanting in either of them. By this means you will assure yourself, and satisfy your friends, that several important pieces are safe in your hands, and that the report is false and groundless. All this

I take the liberty to offer out of the singular respect I always professed for you, and for the memory of Mr. Collins, to whom I have endeavoured to do justice on all occasions, and particularly in the memoirs that have been made use of in the General Dictionary; and I hope my tender concern for his reputation will further appear when I publish his life.

Sir, *April* 6, 1737.

My ill state of health has hindered me from acknowledging sooner the receipt of yours, from which I hoped for some satisfaction in relation to your charge, in which I cannot but think myself very deeply concerned. You tell me now, that you was left to your own conjectures what particular MSS. were reported to have fallen into the hands of strangers, and that upon a serious consideration you was induced to believe that it might relate to the MSS. in eight vols. 8vo., of which there was a transcript.

I must beg of you to satisfy me very explicitly who were the persons that reported this to you, and from whom did you receive this information? You know that Mr. Collins left several MSS. behind him; what grounds had you for your conjecture that it related to the MSS. in eight vols. rather than to any other MSS. of which there was a transcript? I beg that you will be very plain, and tell me what strangers were named to you? and why you said the Bishop of London, if your informer, said stranger to you? I am so much concerned in this, that I must repeat it, if you have the singular respect for Mr. Collins which you profess, that you would help me to trace out this reproach, which is so abusive to,

Sir,

Your servant,

Eliz. Collins

To Mrs. Collins.

I flattered myself that my last letter would have satisfied you, but I have the mortification to see that my hopes were vain. Therefore I beg leave once more to set this matter right. When I told you what had been reported, I acted, as I thought, the part of a true friend, by acquainting you that some of your MSS. had been purloined, in order that you might examine a fact which to me appeared of the last consequence; and I verily believe that every body in my case would have expected thanks for such a friendly information. But instead of that I find myself represented as an enemy, and challenged to produce proofs and witnesses of a thing dropt in conversation, a hear-say, as if in those cases people kept a register of what they hear, and entered the names of the persons who spoke, the time, place, *&c.*, and had with them persons ready to witness the whole, *&c.* I did own I never thought of such thing, and whenever I happened to hear that some of my friends had some loss, I thought it my duty to acquaint them with such report, that they might inquire into the matter, and see whether there was any ground for it. But I never troubled myself with the names of the persons who spoke, as being a thing entirely needless and unprofitable.

Give me leave further to observe, that you are in no ways *concerned* in the matter, as you seem to be apprehensive you are. Suppose some MSS. have been taken out of your library, who will say you ought to bear the guilt of it? What man in his senses, who has the honour to know you, will say you gave your consent to such thing—that you was privy to it? How can you then take upon yourself an action to which you

was neither privy and consenting? Do not such things happen every day, and do the losers think themselves injured or *abused* when they are talked of? Is it impossible to be betrayed by a person we confided in?

You call what I told you was a report, a surmise; you call it, I say, an *information*, and speak of *informers* as if there was a plot laid, wherein I received the information: I thought I had the honour to be better known to you. Mr. Collins loved me and esteemed me for my integrity and sincerity, of which he had several proofs; how I have been drawn in to injure him, to forfeit the good opinion he had of me, and which, were he now alive, would deservedly expose me to his utmost contempt, is a grief which I shall carry to the grave. It would be a sort of comfort to me, if those who have consented I should be drawn in were in some measure sensible of the guilt towards so good, kind, and generous a man.

Thus we find that *seven years* after Des Maizeaux had inconsiderately betrayed his sacred trust, his remorse was still awake; and the sincerity of his grief is attested by the affecting style which describes it: the spirit of his departed friend seemed to be hovering about him, and, in his imagination, would haunt him to the grave.

The nature of these manuscripts; the cause of the earnest desire of retaining them by the widow; the evident unfriendliness of her conduct to Des

Maizeaux; and whether these manuscripts, consisting of eight octavo volumes with their transcripts, were destroyed, or are still existing, are all circumstances which my researches have hitherto not ascertained.

HISTORY OF NEW WORDS.

Neology, or the novelty of words and phrases, is an innovation, which, with the opulence of our present language, the English philologer is most jealous to allow; but we have puritans or precisans of English, superstitiously nice! The fantastic coinage of affectation or caprice will cease to circulate from its own alloy; but shall we reject the ore of fine workmanship and solid weight? There is no government mint of words, and it is no statutable offence to invent a felicitous or daring expression unauthorized by Mr. Todd! When a man of genius, in the heat of his pursuits or his feelings, has thrown out a peculiar word, it probably conveyed more precision or energy than any other established word, otherwise he is but an ignorant pretender!

Julius Cæsar, who, unlike other great captains, is authority in words as well as about blows, wrote a large treatise on "Analogy," in which that fine genius counselled to "avoid every unusual word

as a rock*!" The cautious Quintilian, as might be expected, opposes all innovation in language. "If the new word is well received, small is the glory; if rejected, it raises laughter†" This only marks the penury of his feelings in this species of adventure! The great legislator of words, who lived when his own language was at its acmé, seems undecided, yet pleaded for this liberty. "Shall that which the Romans allowed to Cæcilius and to Plautus be refused to Virgil and Varius?" The answer to the question might not be favourable to the inquirer. While a language is forming, writers are applauded for extending its limits; when established, for restricting themselves to them. But this is to imagine that a perfect language can exist! The good sense and observation of Horace perceived that there may be occasions where necessity must become the mother of invented words:

——————— Si forte necesse est
Indiciis monstrare recentibus abdita rerum.

If you write of things abstruse or new,
Some of your own inventing may be used,
So it be seldom and discreetly done.

ROSCOMMON.

* Aulus Gellius, lib. i. c. 10. † Instit. lib. i. c. 5.

But Horace's canon for deciding on the legality of the new invention, or the standard by which it is to be tried, will not serve to assist the inventor of words :

> ——————— licuit, semperque licebit,
> Signatum præsente nota procudere nummum*.
>
> ——————— an undisputed power
> Of coining money from the rugged ore,
> Nor less of coining words, is still confest,
> If with a *legal public stamp* imprest.
>
> FRANCIS.

This *præsens nota*, or public stamp, can never be affixed to any new coinage of words ; for many received at a season have perished with it. The privilege of stamping words is reserved for their greatest enemy—Time itself! and the inventor of a new word must never flatter himself that he has secured the public adoption, for he must lie in his grave before he can enter the dictionary.

In Wille's address to the reader, prefixed to the collection of voyages published in 1577, he finds fault with Eden's translation from Peter

* This verse was corrected by Bentley *procudere nummum*, instead of *producere nomen*, which the critics agree is one of his happy conjectures.

Martyr, for using words that " smelt too much of the Latine." We should scarcely have expected to find among them *ponderouse, portentouse, despicable, obsequious, homicide, imbibed, destructive, prodigious.* The only words he quotes, not thoroughly naturalized, are *dominators, ditionaries,* (subjects,) *solicitute,* (careful).

The Tatler, No. 230, introduces several polysyllables introduced by military narrations, " which, (he says,) if they attack us too frequently, we shall certainly put them to flight, and cut off the rear ;" every one of them still keep their ground.

Half the French words used affectedly by Melantha, in Dryden's Marriage à-la-mode, as innovations in our language, are now in common use, *naïveté, foible, chagrin, grimace, embarras, double entendre, equivoque, eclaircissement, ridicule,* all these words which she learns by heart to use occasionally, are now in common use. A Dr. Russel called Psalm-singers *Ballad-singers,* having found the Song of Solomon in an old translation, the *Ballad of Ballads,* for which he is reproached by his antagonist for not knowing that the signification of words alters with time ; should

I call him *knave,* he ought not to be concerned at it, for the Apostle Paul is also called *a knave of Jesus Christ.*

Unquestionably, NEOLOGY opens a wide door to innovation; scarcely has a century passed since our language was patched up with gallic idioms, as in the preceding century it was piebald with Spanish, and with Italian, and even with Dutch. The political intercourse of islanders with their neighbours has ever influenced their language. In Elizabeth's reign Italian phrases and Netherland words were imported; in James and Charles the Spanish framed the style of courtesy; in Charles the Second the nation and the language were equally Frenchified. Yet such are the sources whence we have often derived some of the wealth of our language!

There are three foul corrupters of a language; caprice, affectation, and ignorance! Such fashionable cant terms as "theatricals," and "musicals," invented by the flippant Topham, still survive among his confraternity of frivolity. A lady eminent for the elegance of her taste, and of whom one of the best judges, the celebrated Miss Edgeworth, observed to me, that she spoke the

purest and most idiomatic English she had ever heard, threw out an observation which might be extended to a great deal of our present fashionable vocabulary. She is now old enough, she said, to have lived to hear the vulgarisms of her youth adopted in drawing-room circles. To *lunch*, now so familiar from the fairest lips, in her youth was only known in the servants' hall. An expression very rife of late among our young ladies, *a nice man*, whatever it may mean, whether the man resemble a pudding, or something more nice, conveys the offensive notion that they are ready to eat him up! When I was a boy, it was an age of *Bon ton;* this *good tone* mysteriously conveyed a sublime idea of fashion; the term imported late in the eighteenth century, closed with it. *Twaddle* for awhile succeeded *bore;* but *bore* has recovered the supremacy. We want another Swift to give a new edition of his "Polite Conversation." A dictionary of barbarisms too might be collected from some wretched neologists, whose pens are now at work! Lord Chesterfield, in his exhortations to conform to Johnson's Dictionary, was desirous, however, that the great lexicographer should add as an appendix

"*A neological Dictionary*, containing those polite, though perhaps not strictly grammatical, words and phrases commonly used, and sometimes understood by the *beau-monde*." This last phrase was doubtless a contribution! Such a dictionary had already appeared in the French language, drawn up by two caustic critics, who in the *Dictionnaire neologique à l'usage des beaux Esprits du Siècle*, collected together the numerous unlucky inventions of affectation, with their modern authorities! A collection of the fine words and phrases culled from some very modern poetry, might show the real amount of the favours bestowed on us.

The attempts of neologists are, however, not necessarily to be condemned; and we may join with the commentators of Aulus Gellius, who have lamented the loss of a chapter, of which the title only has descended to us. That chapter would have demonstrated what happens to all languages, that some neologisms, which at first are considered forced or inelegant, become sanctioned by use, and in time are quoted as authority in the very language which, in their early stage, they were imagined to have debased.

The true history of men's minds is found in their actions; their wants are indicated by their contrivances; and certain it is that in highly cultivated ages we discover the most refined intellects attempting NEOLOGISMS. It would be a subject of great curiosity to trace the origin of many happy expressions, when, and by whom created. Plato substituted the term *Providence* for *fate;* and a new system of human affairs arose from a single word. Cicero invented several; to this philosopher we owe the term of *moral* philosophy, which before his time was called the philosophy of *manners.* But on this subject we are perhaps more interested by the modern than by the ancient languages. Richardson, the painter of the human heart, has coined some expressions to indicate its little secret movements which are admirable: that great genius merited a higher education and more literary leisure than the life of a printer could afford. Montaigne created some bold expressions, many of which have not survived him; his *incuriositié* so opposite to curiosity, well describes that state of negligence where we will not learn that of which we are ignorant. With us the word *incurious* was

described by Heylin, in 1656, as an unusual word; it has been appropriately adopted by our best writers; although we still want *incuriosity*. Charron invented *etrangeté* unsuccessfully, but which, says a French critic, would be the true substantive of the word *etrange;* our Locke is the solitary instance produced for "foreignness" for "remoteness or want of relation to something." Malherbe borrowed from the Latin *insidieux, securité,* which have been received; but a bolder word *devouloir,* by which he proposed to express *cesser de vouloir,* has not. A term, however, expressive and precise. Corneille happily introduced *invaincu* in a verse in the Cid,

Vous etes *invaincu,* mais non pas *invincible.*

Yet this created word by their great poet has not sanctioned this fine distinction among the French, for we are told that it is almost a solitary instance. Balzac was a great inventor of neologisms. *Urbanité* and *feliciter* were struck in his mint. "Si le mot *feliciter* n'est pas Français il le sera l'année qui vient;" so confidently proud was the neologist, and it prospered as well as *urbanité,* of which he says, "Quand l'usage aura

muri parmi nous un mot de si mauvais gout, et corrigé *l'amertume de la nouveauté* qui s'y peut trouver, nous nous y accoutumerons comme aux autres que nous avons emprunté de la même langue." Balzac was, however, too sanguine in some other words; for his *delecter*, his *seriosité*, *&c.* still retain their "bitterness of novelty."

Menage invented a term of which an equivalent is wanting in our language; "J'ai fait *prosateur* à l'imitation de l'Italien *prosatore*, pour dire un homme qui écrit en prose." To distinguish a prose from a verse writer, we *once* had "a proser." Drayton uses it; but this useful distinction has unluckily degenerated, and the current sense is so daily urgent, that the purer sense is irrecoverable.

When D'Ablancourt was translating Lucian, he invented in French the words *indolence* and *indolent;* to describe a momentary languor, rather than that habitual indolence, in which sense they are now accepted; and in translating Tacitus, he created the word *turbulemment;* but it did not prosper, any more than that of *temporisement.* Segrais invented the word *impardonable*, which, after having been rejected, was

revived, and is equivalent to our expressive *unpardonable.* Moliere ridiculed some neologisms of the *Precieuses* of his day; but we are too apt to ridicule that which is new and which we often adopt when it becomes old. Moliere laughed at the term *s'encannailler,* to describe one who assumed the manners of a blackguard; the expressive word has remained in the language.

There are two remarkable French words created by the Abbé de Saint Pierre, who passed his meritorious life in the contemplation of political morality and universal benevolence—*bienfaisance* and *gloriole.* He invented *gloriole* as a contemptuous diminutive of *gloire;* to describe that vanity of some egotists, so proud of the small talents which they may have received from nature or from accident. *Bienfaisance* first appeared in this sentence: "L'Esprit de la vraie religion et le principal but de l'evangile c'est *la bienfaisance,* c'est-à-dire la pratique de la charité envers le prochain." This word was so new, that in the moment of its creation this good man explained its necessity and origin. Complaining that "the word 'charity' is abused by all sorts of Christians in the persecution of their enemies,

and even heretics affirm that they are practising Christian charity in persecuting other heretics, I have sought for a term which might convey to us a precise idea of doing good to our neighbours, and I can form none more proper to make myself understood than the term of *bienfaisance*, good-doing. Let those who like, use it; I would only be understood, and it is not equivocal." The happy word was at first criticised, but at length every kind heart found it responded to its own feeling. Some verses from Voltaire, alluding to the political reveries of the good abbé, notice the critical opposition; yet the new word answered to the great rule of Horace.

" Certain legislateur, dont la plume feconde
Fit tant de vains projects pour le bien du monde,
Et qui depuis trente ans écrit pour des ingrats,
Viens de creer un mot qui manque a Vaugelas:
Ce mot est BIENFAISANCE, il me plait, il rassemble
Si le cœur en est cru, bien des vertus ensemble.
Petits grammairiens, grands precepteurs de sots,
Qui pesez la parole et mesurez les mots,
Pareille expression vous semble hazardée,
Mais l'univers entier doit en cherir l'idée !"

The French revolutionists, in their rage for innovation, almost barbarised the pure French of

the Augustan age of their literature, as they did many things which never before occurred; and sometimes experienced feelings as transitory as they were strange. Their nomenclature was copious; but the revolutionary jargon often shows the danger and the necessity of neologisms. They form an appendix to the Academy Dictionary. Our plain English has served to enrich this odd mixture of philology and politics: *Club, clubists, comité, juré, juge de paix,* blend with their *terrorisme, lanterner,* a verb active, *levée en masse, noyades,* and the other verb active *Septembriser, &c.* The barbarous term *demoralisation* is said to have been the invention of the horrid capuchin Chabot; and the remarkable expression of *arrière-pensée* belonged exclusively in its birth to the jesuitic astuteness of the Abbé Sieyes, that political actor who, in changing sides, never required prompting in his new part!

A new word, the result of much consideration with its author, or a term which, though unknown to the language, conveys a collective assemblage of ideas by a fortunate designation, is a precious contribution of genius; new words should convey new ideas. Swift, living amidst a civil war

of pamphlets, when certain writers were regularly employed by one party to draw up replies to the other, created a term not to be found in our dictionaries, but which, by a single stroke, characterizes these hirelings; he called them *answer-jobbers*. We have not dropped the fortunate expression from any want of its use, but of perception in our lexicographers. The celebrated Marquis of Lansdowne introduced an useful word, which has been of late warmly adopted in France as well as in England—to *liberalise;* the noun has been drawn out of the verb—for in the marquis's time, that was only an abstract conception which is now a sect; and to *liberalise* was theoretically introduced before the *liberals* arose*. It is curious to observe that as an adjective it had formerly in our language a very opposite meaning to its recent one. It was synonymous with "libertine or licentious," we have "a *liberal* villain" and "a most profane and *liberal* counsellor," we find one declaring "I have

* The Quarterly Review recently marked the word *liberalise* in Italics as a strange word, undoubtedly not aware of its origin. It has been lately used by Mr. Dugald Stewart, "to *liberalise* the views." Dissert. 2d part, p. 138.

spoken *too liberally*." This is unlucky for the *liberals*, who will not—

> " Give allowance to our *liberal* jests
> Upon their persons—"
>
> BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

My learned friend Archdeacon Nares in his valuable Glossary has supplied a variety of instances.

Dr. Priestley employed a forcible, but not an elegant, term, to mark the general information which had begun in his day ; this he frequently calls " the *spread* of knowledge." Burke attempted to brand with a new name that set of pert, petulant, sophistical sciolists, whose philosophy, the French, since their revolutionary period, have distinguished as *philosophism*, and the philosophers themselves as *philosophistes*. He would have designated them as *literators*, but few exotic words will circulate ; new words must be the coinage of our own language to blend with the vernacular idiom. Many new words are still wanted. We have no word by which we could translate the *otium* of the Latins, the *dilettante* of the Italians, the *alembiqué* of the French, as an epithet to describe that sublimated ingenuity which exhausts the mind, till, like the fusion of

the diamond, the intellect itself disappears. A philosopher, in an extensive view of a subject in all its bearings, may convey to us the result of his last considerations, by the coinage of a novel and significant expression as this of Professor Dugald Stewart—*political religionism*. Let me claim the honour of one pure neologism. I ventured to introduce the term of FATHER-LAND to describe our *natale solum ;* I have lived to see it adopted by Lord Byron and by Mr. Southey. This energetic expression may therefore be considered as authenticated; and patriotism may stamp it with its glory and its affection. FATHER-LAND is congenial with the language in which we find that other fine expression of MOTHER-TONGUE. The patriotic neologism originated with me in Holland, when, in early life, it was my daily pursuit to turn over the glorious history of its independence under the title of *Vaderlandsche Historie*—the history of FATHERLAND!

If we acknowledge that the creation of some neologisms may sometimes produce the beautiful, the revival of the dead is the more authentic miracle; for a new word must long remain doubtful, but an ancient word happily recovered

rests on a basis of permanent strength—it has both novelty and authority! A collection of *picturesque words*, found among our ancient writers, would constitute a precious supplement to the history of our language, Far more expressive than our term of *executioner* is their solemn one of the *deathsman*; than our *vagabond* their *scatterling*; than our *idiot* or *lunatic* their *moonling*; a word which Mr. Gifford observes should not have been suffered to grow obsolete. Herrick finely describes by the term *pittering* the peculiar shrill and short cry of the grasshopper*. Envy "*dusking* the lustre" of genius, is a verb lost for us, but which gives a more precise expression to the feeling than any other words which we could use.

The late Dr. Boucher, of whose projected Thesaurus of our ancient English language we only possess the first letter of the alphabet, while the great and precious portion is suffered to moulder away among his family, in the prospectus of that work, did me the honour, then a young writer, to quote an opinion I had formed early in

* The cry of the grasshopper is *pit! pit! pit!* quickly repeated.

life of the purest source of neology—which is in the *revival of old words.*

"Words, that wise BACON or brave RAWLEIGH spake!"

We have lost many exquisite and picturesque expressions through the dulness of our lexicographers, or by their deficiency in that profounder study of our writers which their labours require far more than they themselves know. The natural graces of our language have been impoverished! The genius that throws its prophetic eye over the language, and the taste that must come from Heaven, no lexicographer imagines are required to accompany him amidst a library of old books!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROVERBS.

In antique furniture we sometimes discover a convenience which long disuse had made us unacquainted with, and are surprised by the aptness which we did not suspect was concealed in its solid forms. We have found the labour of the workman to have been as admirable as the material itself, which is still resisting the mouldering touch of Time among those modern inventions, elegant and unsubstantial, which, often put together with unseasoned wood, are apt to warp and fly into pieces when brought into use. We have found how strength consists in the selection of materials, and that, whenever the substitute is not better than the original, we are losing something in that test of experience, which all things derive from duration.

Be this as it may! I shall not unreasonably await for the artists of our novelties to retrograde into massive greatness, although I cannot avoid reminding them how often they revive the forgotten things of past times! It is well known

that many of our novelties were in use by our ancestors! In the history of the human mind there is, indeed, a sort of antique furniture which I collect, not merely from their antiquity, but for the sound condition in which I still find them, and the compactness which they still show. Centuries have not worm-eaten their solidity, and the utility and delightfulness which they still afford make them look as fresh and as ingenious as any of our patent inventions.

By the title of the present article the reader has anticipated the nature of the old furniture to which I allude. I propose to give what, in the style of our times, may be called the philosophy of PROVERBS—a topic which seems virgin. The art of reading proverbs has not, indeed, always been acquired even by some of their admirers; but my observations, like their subject, must be versatile and unconnected; and I must bespeak indulgence for an attempt to illustrate a very curious branch of literature, rather not understood than quite forgotten.

PROVERBS have long been in disuse. "A man of fashion," observes Lord Chesterfield, "never has recourse to proverbs and vulgar aphorisms;"

and since the time his lordship so solemnly interdicted their use, they appear to have withered away under the ban of his anathema. His lordship was little conversant with the history of proverbs, and would unquestionably have smiled on those "men of fashion" of another stamp, who, in the days of Elizabeth, James, and Charles, were great collectors of them; would appeal to them in their conversations, and enforce them in their learned or their statesman-like correspondence. Few, perhaps, even now suspect, that these neglected fragments of wisdom, which exist among all nations, still offer many interesting objects for the studies of the philosopher and the historian; and for men of the world still open an extensive school of human life and manners.

The home-spun adages, and the rusty "sayed-saws" which remain in the mouths of the people, are adapted to their capacities and their humours; easily remembered, and readily applied: these are the philosophy of the vulgar, and often more sound than that of their masters! Whoever would learn what the people think, and how they feel, must not reject even these as insignificant.

The proverbs of the street and of the market, true to nature, and lasting only because they are true, are records how the populace at Athens and at Rome were the same people as at Paris and at London, and as they had before been in the city of Jerusalem!

Proverbs existed before books. The Spaniards date the origin of their *refranes que dicen las viejas tras el fuego*, "sayings of old wives by their firesides," before the existence of any writings in their language, from the circumstance that these are in the old romance or rudest vulgar idiom. The most ancient poem in the Edda, "the sublime speech of Odin," abounds with ancient proverbs, strikingly descriptive of the ancient Scandinavians. Undoubtedly proverbs in the earliest ages long served as the unwritten language of morality, and even of the useful arts; like the oral traditions of the Jews, they floated down from age to age on the lips of successive generations. The name of the first sage who sanctioned the saying would in time be forgotten, while the opinion, the metaphor, or the expression, remained, consecrated into A PROVERB! Such was the origin of those memorable sentences

by which men learnt to think and to speak appositely; they were precepts which no man could contradict, at a time when authority was valued more than opinion, and experience preferred to novelty. The proverbs of a father became the inheritance of a son; the mistress of a family perpetuated hers through her household; the workman condensed some traditional secret of his craft into a proverbial expression. When countries are not yet populous, and property has not yet produced great inequalities in its ranks, every day will show them how "the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty, and drowsiness clothes a man with rags." At such a period he who gave counsel gave wealth.

It might therefore have been decided, *à priori*, that the most homely proverbs would abound in the most ancient writers—and such we find in Hesiod; a poet whose learning was not drawn from books. It could only have been in the agricultural state that this venerable bard could have indicated a state of repose by this rustic proverb.

πηδαλιον μεν ὑπερ καπνε καλαδεῖο.

"Hang your plough-beam o'er the hearth!"

The envy of rival workmen is as justly described by a reference to the humble manufacturers of earthen-ware as by the elevated jealousies of the literati and the artists of a more polished age. The famous proverbial verse in Hesiod's Works and Days,

Καὶ κεραμεὺς κεραμεῖ κοτέει,

is literally, "The potter is hostile to the potter!"

The admonition of the poet to his brother, to prefer a friendly accommodation to a litigious law-suit, has fixed a paradoxical proverb often applied,

πλέον ἥμισυ παντός.
"The half is better than the whole!"

In the progress of time, the stock of popular proverbs received accessions from the highest sources of human intelligence; as the philosophers of antiquity formed their collections, they increased in "weight and number." Erasmus has pointed out some of these sources, in the responses of oracles; the allegorical symbols of Pythagoras; the verses of the poets; allusions to historical incidents; mythology and apologue;

and other recondite origins: such dissimilar matters coming from all quarters, were melted down into this vast body of aphoristic knowledge. Those "WORDS OF THE WISE, and their DARK SAYINGS," as they are distinguished in that large collection which bears the name of the great Hebrew monarch, at length seem to have required commentaries; for what else can we infer of the enigmatic wisdom of the sages, when the royal paræmiographer classes among their studies, that of "*understanding a proverb and the interpretation?*" This elevated notion of "the dark sayings of the wise" accords with the bold conjecture of their origin, which the Stagirite has thrown out, who considered them as the wrecks of an ancient philosophy which had been lost to mankind by the fatal revolutions of all human things, and that those had been saved from the general ruin by their pithy elegance, and their diminutive form; like those marine shells found on the tops of mountains, the relics of the Deluge! Even at a later period, the sage of Cheronea prized them among the most solemn mysteries; and Plutarch has described them in a manner which proverbs may even still merit; "Under the veil of these

curious sentences are hid those germs of morals, which the masters of philosophy have afterwards developed into so many volumes."

At the highest period of Grecian genius, the tragic and the comic poets introduced into their dramas the proverbial style. St. Paul quotes a line which still remains among the first exercises of our school-pens :

"Evil communications corrupt good manners."

It is a verse found in a fragment of Menander, the comic poet :

Φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρήσθ' ὁμιλίαι κακαί.

As this verse is a proverb, and the apostle, and indeed the highest authority, Jesus himself, consecrates the use of proverbs by their occasional application, it is uncertain whether St. Paul quotes the Grecian poet, or only repeats some popular adage. Proverbs were bright shafts in the Greek and Latin quivers ; and when Bentley, by a league of superficial wits, was accused of pedantry for his use of some ancient proverbs, the sturdy critic vindicated his taste, by showing that Cicero constantly introduced Greek

proverbs into his writings—that Scaliger and Erasmus loved them, and had formed collections drawn from the stores of antiquity.

Some difficulty has occurred in the definition. Proverbs must be distinguished from proverbial phrases, and from sententious maxims; but as proverbs have many faces, from their miscellaneous nature, the class itself scarcely admits of any definition. When Johnson defined a proverb to be "a short sentence frequently repeated by the people," this definition would not include the most curious ones, which have not always circulated among the populace, nor even belong to them; nor does it designate the vital qualities of a proverb. The pithy quaintness of old Howel has admirably described the ingredients of an exquisite proverb to be *sense, shortness, and salt.* A proverb is distinguished from a maxim or an apophthegm, by that brevity which condenses a thought or a metaphor, where one thing is said and another is to be applied; this often produces wit; and that quick pungency which excites surprise, but strikes with conviction; this gives it an epigrammatic turn. George Herbert entitled the small collection which he formed "Jacula

Prudentum," Darts or Javelins! something hurled and striking deeply; a characteristic of a proverb which possibly Herbert may have borrowed from a remarkable passage in Plato's dialogue of "Protagoras, or the Sophists."

The influence of PROVERBS over the minds and conversations of a whole people is strikingly illustrated by this philosopher's explanation of the term *to laconise;* the mode of speech peculiar to the Lacedæmonians. This people affected to appear *unlearned,* and seemed only emulous to excel the rest of the Greeks in fortitude and in military skill. According to Plato's notion, this was really a political artifice, with a view to conceal their pre-eminent wisdom. With the jealousy of a petty state they attempted to confine their renowned sagacity within themselves, and under their military to hide their contemplative character! The philosopher assures those who in other cities imagined they *laconised,* merely by imitating the severe exercises, and the other warlike manners of the Lacedæmonians, that they were grossly deceived; and thus curiously describes the sort of wisdom which this singular people practised.

"If any one wishes to converse with the meanest of the Lacedæmonians, he will at first find him, for the most part, apparently despicable in conversation; but afterwards, when a proper opportunity presents itself, this same mean person, like a *skilful jaculator, will hurl a sentence* worthy of attention *short and contorted;* so that he who converses with him will appear to be in no respect superior to a boy! That *to laconise,* therefore, consists much more in philosophising than in the love of exercise, is understood by some of the present age, and was known to the ancients, they being persuaded that the ability of *uttering such sentences* as these is the province of a man perfectly learned. The seven sages were emulators, lovers, and disciples of the *Lacedæmonian erudition.* Their wisdom was a thing of this kind; viz., *short sentences uttered by each, and worthy to be remembered.* These men, assembling together, consecrated to Apollo the first fruits of their wisdom; writing in the temple of Apollo, at Delphi, those sentences, which are celebrated by all men, viz., *Know Thyself!* and *Nothing too much!* But on what account do I mention these things?—to show that *the mode*

*of philosophy among the ancients was a certain laconic diction**."

The "laconisms" of the Lacedæmonians evidently partook of the proverbial style: they were, no doubt, often proverbs themselves. The very instances which Plato supplies of this "laconising" are two most venerable proverbs.

All this elevates the science of PROVERBS, and indicates that these abridgments of knowledge convey great results, with a parsimony of words prodigal of sense. They have, therefore, preserved many "a short sentence, NOT repeated by the people."

It is evident, however, that the earliest writings of every people are marked by their most homely, or domestic proverbs; for these were more directly addressed to their wants. Franklin, who may be considered as the founder of a people, who were suddenly placed in a stage of civil society which as yet could afford no literature, discovered the philosophical cast of his genius, when he filled his almanacks with proverbs, by the ingenious contrivance of framing them into a connected discourse, delivered by an old man

* Taylor's Translation of Plato's Works, Vol. V. p. 36.

attending an auction. "These proverbs," he tells us, "which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, when their scattered counsels were brought together, made a great impression. They were reprinted in Britain, in a large sheet of paper, and stuck up in houses; and were twice translated in France, and distributed among their poor parishioners." The same occurrence had happened with us ere we became a reading people. Much later even than the reign of Elizabeth our ancestors had proverbs always before them, on every thing which had room for a piece of advice on it; they had them painted in their tapestries, stamped on the most ordinary utensils, on the blades of their knives, the borders of their plates*, and "conned them out of Goldsmith's rings." The usurer, in Robert Greene's "Groat's worth of Wit," compressed all his philosophy into the circle of his ring, having learnt sufficient Latin to understand the proverbial motto of "Tu tibi cura!" The husband was reminded of his lordly authority when he only looked into his

* One of the *fruit tenchers*, for such these roundels are called in the *Gent. Mag.*, for 1793, p. 398, is engraved there, and the inscriptions of an entire set given.—See also the Suppliment to that volume, p. 1187.

trencher, one of its learned aphorisms having descended to us,—

"The calmest husbands make the stormyest wives."

The English proverbs of the populace, most of which are still in circulation, were collected by old John Heywood*. They are arranged by Tusser for "the parlour—the guest's chamber—the hall—table-lessons," *&c.* Not a small portion of our ancient proverbs were adapted to rural life, when our ancestors lived more than ourselves amidst the works of God, and less among those of men. At this time, one of our old statesmen, in commending the art of compressing a tedious discourse into a few significant phrases, suggested the use of proverbs in diplomatic intercourse, convinced of the great benefit which would result to the negotiators themselves, as well as to others! I give a literary curiosity of this kind. A member of the house of commons, in the reign of Elizabeth, made a speech entirely

* Heywood's "Dialogue, conteyninge the Number in Effecte of all the Proverbes in the English Tunge, 1561." There are more editions of this little volume than Warton has noticed. There is some humour in his narrative, but his metre and his ribaldry are heavy taxes on our curiosity.

composed of the most homely proverbs. The subject was a bill against double-payments of book-debts. Knavish tradesmen were then in the habit of swelling out their book-debts with those who took credit, particularly to their younger customers. One of the members who began to speak "for very fear shook," and stood silent. The nervous orator was followed by a blunt and true representative of the famed governor of Barataria, delivering himself thus—"It is now my chance to speak something, and that without humming or hawing. I think this law is a good law. Even reckoning makes long friends. As far goes the penny as the penny's master. *Vigilantibus non dormientibus jura subveniunt.* Pay the reckoning over-night, and you shall not be troubled in the morning. If ready money be *mensura publica*, let every one cut his coat according to his cloth. When his old suit is in the wane, let him stay till that his money bring a new suit in the increase*."

Another instance of the use of proverbs among our statesmen occurs in a manuscript letter of

* Townshend's Historical Collections, p. 283.

Sir Dudley Carlton, written in 1632 on the impeachment of Lord Middlesex, who, he says, is "this day to plead his own cause in the exchequer-chamber, about an account of four-score thousand pounds laid to his charge. How his lordships sped I know not, but do remember well the French proverb, *Qui mange de l'oye du Roy chiera une plume quarante ans apres.* "Who eats of the king's goose, will void a feather forty years after!"

This was the æra of proverbs with us; for then they were *spoken* by all ranks of society. The free use of trivial proverbs got them into disrepute; and as the abuse of a thing raises a just opposition to its practice, a slender wit affecting "a cross humour," published a little volume of "Crossing of Proverbs, Cross-answers, and Cross-humours." He pretends to contradict the most popular ones; but he has not always the genius to strike at amusing paradoxes*.

* It was published in 1616: the writer only catches at some verbal expressions—as, for instance,
The vulgar proverb runs, "The more the merrier."
The cross,—"Not so! one hand is enough in a purse!"
The proverb, "It is a great way to the bottom of the sea."

The

Proverbs were long the favourites of our neighbours: in the splendid and refined court of Louis XIV., they gave rise to an odd invention. They plotted comedies and even fantastical ballets, from their subjects. In these Curiosities of Literature I cannot pass by such eccentric inventions unnoticed.

A Comedy *of proverbs* is described by the Duke de la Valliere, which was performed in 1634, with prodigious success. He considers that this comedy ought to be ranked among farces; but it is gay, well-written, and curious for containing the best proverbs, which are happily introduced in the dialogue.

A more extraordinary attempt was A Ballet *of proverbs*. Before the opera was established in France, the ancient ballets formed the chief amusement of the court, and Louis XIV. himself

The cross,—" Not so! it is but a stone's cast."
The proverb, " The pride of the rich makes the labours of the poor."
The cross,—" Not so! the labours of the poor make the pride of the rich."
The proverb, " He runs far who never turns."
The cross,—" Not so; he may break his neck in a short course."

joined with the performers. The singular attempt of forming a pantomimical dance out of proverbs is quite French; we have a "ballet des proverbes, dansé par le Roi, in 1654." At every proverb the scene changed, and adapted itself to the subject. I shall give two or three of the *entrées* that we may form some notion of these *capriccios*.

The proverb was

Tel menace qui a grand peur.
"He threatens who is afraid!"

The scene was composed of swaggering scaramouches and some honest cits, who at length beat them off.

At another *entrée* the proverb was

L'occasion fait le larron.
"Opportunity makes the thief."

Opportunity was acted by le Sieur Beaubrun, but it is difficult to conceive how the real could personify the abstract personage. The thieves were the Duke d'Amville and Monsieur de la Chesnaye.

Another *entrée* was the proverb of

Ce qui vient de la flute s'en va au tambeur.
"What comes by the pipe goes by the tabor."

A loose dissipated officer was performed by le

Sieur l'Anglois; the *pipe* by St. Aignan, and the *tabor* by le Sieur le Comte! In this manner every proverb was *spoken in action*, the whole connected by dialogue: more must have depended on the actors than the poet *.

The French long retained this fondness for proverbs; for they still have dramatic compositions entitled *proverbes*, on a more refined plan. Their invention is so recent, that the term is not in their great dictionary of Trevoux. These *proverbes* are dramas of a single act, invented by Carmontel, who possessed a peculiar vein of humour, but who designed them only for private theatricals. Each *proverb* furnished a subject for a few scenes, and created a situation powerfully comic: it is a dramatic amusement which does not appear to have reached us, but one which the celebrated Catharine of Russia delighted to compose for her own society.

Among the middle classes of society to this day, we may observe that certain family proverbs are traditionally preserved: the favourite saying

* It has been suggested that this whimsical amusement has been lately revived, to a certain degree, in the *acting of Charades* among juvenile parties.

of a father is repeated by the sons; and frequently the conduct of a whole generation has been influenced by such domestic proverbs. This may be perceived in many of the mottoes of our old nobility, which seem to have originated in some habitual proverb of the founder of the family. In ages when proverbs were most prevalent, such pithy sentences would admirably serve in the ordinary business of life, and lead on to decision, even in its greater exigencies. Orators, by some lucky proverb, without wearying their auditors, would bring conviction home to their bosoms; and great characters would appeal to a proverb, or deliver that, which, in time, by its aptitude, became one. When Nero was reproached for the ardour with which he gave himself up to the study of music, he replied to his censurers by the Greek proverb, "An artist lives every where." The emperor answered in the spirit of Rousseau's system, that every child should be taught some trade. When Cæsar, after anxious deliberation, decided on the passage of the Rubicon (which very event has given rise to a proverb), rousing himself with a start of courage, he committed himself to Fortune, with that proverbial expres-

sion on his lips, used by gamesters in desperate play: having passed the Rubicon, he exclaimed "The die is cast!" The answer of Paulus Æmilius to the relations of his wife, who had remonstrated with him on his determination to separate himself from her against whom no fault could be alleged, has become one of our most familiar proverbs. This hero acknowledged the excellencies of his lady; but, requesting them to look on his shoe, which appeared to be well made, he observed, "None of you know where the shoe pinches!" He either used a proverbial phrase, or by its aptness it has become one of the most popular.

There are, indeed, proverbs connected with the characters of eminent men; they were either their favourite ones, or have originated with themselves: such a collection would form an historical curiosity. To the celebrated Bayard are the French indebted for a military proverb, which some of them still repeat. "*Ce que le gantelet gagne le gorgerin le mange,* "What the gauntlet gets, the gorget consumes." That reflecting soldier well calculated the profits of a military life, which consumes, in the pomp and

waste which are necessary for its maintenance, the slender pay it receives, and even what its rapacity sometimes acquires. The favourite proverb of Erasmus was *Festina lente!* "Hasten slowly*!" He wished it to be inscribed wherever it could meet our eyes; on public buildings, and on our rings and seals. One of our own statesmen used a favourite sentence, which has enlarged our stock of national proverbs. Sir Amias Pawlet, when he perceived too much hurry in any business, was accustomed to say, "Stay awhile, to make an end the sooner." Oliver Cromwell's coarse, but descriptive proverb, conveys the contempt he felt for some of his mean and troublesome coadjutors: "Nits will be lice!" The Italians have a proverb, which has been occasionally applied to certain political personages:—

Egli e quello che Dio voule;
E sarà quello che Dio vorrà!
"He is what God pleases;
And he shall be what God wills!"

Ere this was a proverb, it had served as an embroidered motto on the mystical mantle of Castruccio

* Now the punning motto of a noble family.

Castracani. That military genius, who sought to revolutionize Italy, and aspired to its sovereignty, lived long enough to repent the wild romantic ambition which provoked all Italy to confederate against him; the mysterious motto he assumed entered into the proverbs of his country! The Border proverb of the Douglases, "It were better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep," was adopted by every border chief, to express, as Sir Walter Scott observes, what the great Bruce had pointed out, that the woods and hills of their country were their safest bulwarks, instead of the fortified places, which the English surpassed their neighbours in the arts of assaulting or defending. These illustrations indicate one of the sources of proverbs; they have often resulted from the spontaneous emotions or the profound reflections of some extraordinary individual, whose energetic expression was caught by a faithful ear, never to perish!

The poets have been very busy with proverbs in all the languages of Europe: some appear to have been the favourite lines of some ancient poem: even in more refined times, many of the pointed verses of Boileau and Pope have become

proverbial. Many trivial and laconic proverbs bear the jingle of alliteration or rhyme, which assisted their circulation, and were probably struck off extempore; a manner which Swift practised, who was a ready coiner of such rhyming and ludicrous proverbs; delighting to startle a collector by his facetious or sarcastic humour, in the shape of an "old saying and true." Some of these rhyming proverbs are, however, terse and elegant: we have

"Little strokes
Fell great oaks."

The Italian—

Chi duo lepri caccia
Uno perde, e l'altro lascia.
"Who hunts two hares, loses one and leaves the other."

The haughty Spaniard—

El dar es honor,
Y el pedir dolor.
"To give is honour, to ask is grief."

And the French—

Ami de table
Est variable.
"The friend of the table
Is very variable."

The composers of these short proverbs were a

numerous race of poets, who, probably, among the dreams of their immortality never suspected that they were to descend to posterity, themselves and their works unknown, while their extempore thoughts would be repeated by their own nation.

Proverbs were at length consigned to the people, when books were addressed to scholars; but the people did not find themselves so destitute of practical wisdom, by preserving their national proverbs, as some of those closet students who had ceased to repeat them. The various humours of mankind, in the mutability of human affairs, had given birth to every species; and men were wise, or merry, or satirical, and mourned or rejoiced in proverbs. Nations held an universal intercourse of proverbs, from the eastern to the western world; for we discover among those which appear strictly national many which are common to them all. Of our own familiar ones several may be tracked among the snows of the Latins and the Greeks, and have sometimes been drawn from "The Mines of the East:" like decayed families which remain in obscurity, they may boast of a high lineal descent

whenever they recover their lost title-deeds. The vulgar proverb, "To carry coals to Newcastle," local and idiomatic as it appears, however, has been borrowed and applied by ourselves; it may be found among the Persians: in the "Bustan" of Sadi we have *Infers piper in Hindostan;* "To carry pepper to Hindostan:" among the Hebrews, "To carry oil to a city of Olives;" a similar proverb occurs in Greek; and in Galland's "Maxims of the East" we may discover how many of the most common proverbs among us, as well as some of Joe Miller's jests, are of oriental origin.

The resemblance of certain proverbs in different nations, must, however, be often ascribed to the identity of human nature; similar situations and similar objects have unquestionably made men think and act and express themselves alike. All nations are parallels of each other! Hence all paræmiographers, or collectors of proverbs, complain of the difficulty of separating their own national proverbs from those which had crept into the language from others, particularly when nations have held much intercourse together. We have a copious collection of Scottish

proverbs by Kelly, but this learned man was mortified at discovering that many which he had long believed to have been genuine Scottish were not only English, but French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and Greek ones; many of his Scottish proverbs are almost literally expressed among the fragments of remote antiquity. It would have surprised him further had he been aware that his Greek originals were themselves but copies, and might have been found in D'Herbelot, Erpenius, and Golius, and in many Asiatic works, which have been more recently introduced to the enlarged knowledge of the European student, who formerly found his most extended researches limited by Hellenistic lore.

Perhaps it was owing to an accidental circumstance that the proverbs of the European nations have been preserved in the permanent form of volumes. Erasmus is usually considered as the first modern collector, but he appears to have been preceded by Polydore Vergil, who bitterly reproaches Erasmus with envy and plagiarism, for passing by his collection without even a poor compliment for the inventor! Polydore was a vain, superficial writer, who prided himself in

leading the way on more topics than the present. Erasmus, with his usual pleasantry, provokingly excuses himself, by acknowledging that he had forgotten his friend's book! Few sympathize with the quarrels of authors; and since Erasmus has written a far better book than Polydore Vergil's, the original "*Adagia*" is left only to be commemorated in literary history as one of its curiosities*.

The "Adagia" of Erasmus contains a collection of about five thousand proverbs, gradually gathered from a constant study of the ancients. Erasmus, blest with the genius which could enliven a folio, delighted himself and all Europe by the continued accessions he made to a volume which even now may be the companion of literary men for a winter day's fire-side. The successful example of Erasmus commanded the imitation of the learned in Europe, and drew their attention to their own national proverbs. Some

* At the Royal Institution there is a fine copy of Polydore Vergil's "Adagia," with his other work, curious in its day, *De Inventoribus Rerum*, printed by Frobenius, in 1521. The *wood-cuts* of this edition seem to me executed with inimitable delicacy, resembling a penciling which Raphael might have envied.

of the most learned men, and some not sufficiently so, were now occupied in this new study *.

* In Spain, Fernandez Nunes, a Greek professor, and the Marquis of Santellana, a grandee, published collections of their *Refrans*, or Proverbs, a term derived A REFERENDO, because it is often repeated. The "Refranes o Proverbios castellanos," par Cæsar Oudin, 1624, translated into French, is a valuable compilation. In Cervantes and Quevedo, the best practical illustrators, they are sown with no sparing hand. There is an ample collection of Italian proverbs, by Florio, who was an Englishman, of Italian origin, and who published "Il Giardino di Ricreatione" at London, so early as in 1591, exceeding six thousand proverbs; but they are unexplained, and are often obscure. Another Italian in England, Torriano, in 1649, published an interesting collection in the diminutive form of a twenty-fours. It was subsequent to these publications in England, that in Italy Angelus Monosini, in 1604, published his collection; and Julius Varini, in 1642, produced his *Scuola del Vulgo*. In France, Oudin, after others had preceded him, published a collection of French proverbs, under the title of *Curiosités Françoises*. Fleury de Bellingen's *Explication de Proverbes François*, on comparing it with *Les Illustres Proverbes Historiques*, a subsequent publication, I discovered to be the same work. It is the first attempt to render the study of proverbs somewhat amusing. The plan consists of a dialogue between a philosopher and a Sancho Pança, who blurts out his proverbs with more delight than understanding. The philosopher takes that opportunity of explaining them by the events in which they originated, which, however, are not always to be depended on. A work of high merit on French proverbs is

The interest we may derive from the study of proverbs is not confined to their universal truths, nor to their poignant pleasantry; a philosophical mind will discover in proverbs a great variety of the most curious knowledge. The manners of a people are painted after life in their domestic proverbs; and it would not be advancing too much to assert, that the genius of the age might be often detected in its prevalent ones. The learned Selden tells us, that the proverbs of several nations were much studied by Bishop Andrews; the reason assigned was, because "by them he knew the minds of several nations,

the unfinished one of the Abbé Tuet, sensible and learned. A collection of Danish proverbs, accompanied by a French translation, was printed at Copenhagen, in a quarto volume, 1761. England may boast of no inferior paræmiographers. The grave and judicious CAMDEN, the religious HERBERT, the entertaining HOWEL, the facetious FULLER, and the laborious RAY, with others, have preserved our national sayings. The Scottish have been largely collected and explained by the learned Kelly. An excellent anonymous collection, not uncommon, in various languages, 1707; the collector and translator was Dr. J. Mapletoft. It must be acknowledged that although no nation exceeds our own in sterling sense, we rarely rival the delicacy, the wit, and the felicity of expression of the Spanish and the Italian, and the poignancy of some of the French proverbs.

which," said he, "is a brave thing, as we count him wise who knows the minds and the insides of men, which is done by knowing what is habitual to them." Lord Bacon condensed a wide circuit of philosophical thought, when he observed that "the genius, wit, and spirit of a nation are discovered by their proverbs."

Proverbs peculiarly national, while they convey to us the modes of thinking, will consequently indicate the modes of acting among a people. The Romans had a proverbial expression for their last stake in play, *Rem ad triarios venisse*, "the reserve are engaged!" a proverbial expression, from which the military habits of the people might be inferred; the *triarii* being their reserve. A proverb has preserved a curious custom of ancient coxcombry, which originally came from the Greeks. To men of effeminate manners in their dress, they applied the proverb of *Unico digitulo scalpit caput.* Scratching the head with a single finger was, it seems, done by the critically nice youths in Rome, that they might not discompose the economy of their hair. The Arab, whose unsettled existence makes him miserable and interested, says, "Vinegar given is better than

honey bought." Every thing of high esteem with him who is so often parched in the desert is described as *milk*—"How large his flow of milk!" is a proverbial expression with the Arab, to distinguish the most copious eloquence. To express a state of perfect repose, the Arabian proverb is, "I throw the rein over my back;" an allusion to the loosening of the cords of the camels which are thrown over their backs when they are sent to pasture. We discover the rustic manners of our ancient Britons in the Cambrian proverbs; many relate to *the hedge*. "The cleanly Briton is seen in the *hedge*: the horse looks not on the *hedge* but the corn: the bad husband's *hedge* is full of gaps." The state of an agricultural people appears in such proverbs as, "You must not count your yearlings till May-day:" and their proverbial sentence for old age is, "An old man's end is to keep sheep!" Turn from the vagrant Arab and the agricultural Briton to a nation existing in a high state of artificial civilization; the Chinese proverbs frequently allude to magnificent buildings. Affecting a more solemn exterior than all other nations, a favourite proverb with them is, "A grave and

majestic outside is, as it were, the *palace* of the soul." Their notion of government is quite architectural. They say, "A sovereign may be compared to a *hall;* his officers to the steps that lead to it; the people to the ground on which they stand." What should we think of a people who had a proverb, that "He who gives blows is a master, he who gives none is a dog?" We should instantly decide on the mean and servile spirit of those who could repeat it; and such we find to have been that of the Bengalese, to whom the degrading proverb belongs, derived from the treatment they were used to receive from their Mogul rulers, who answered the claims of their creditors by a vigorous application of the whip! In some of the Hebrew proverbs we are struck by the frequent allusions of that fugitive people to their own history. The cruel oppression exercised by the ruling power, and the confidence in their hope of change in the day of retribution, was delivered in this Hebrew proverb—"When the tale of bricks is doubled, Moses comes!" The fond idolatry of their devotion to their ceremonial law, and to every thing connected with their sublime Theocracy, in their magnificent

Temple, is finely expressed by this proverb—"None ever took a stone out of the Temple, but the dust did fly into his eyes." The Hebrew proverb that "A fast for a dream, is as fire for stubble," which it kindles, could only have been invented by a people whose superstitions attached a holy mystery to fasts and dreams. They imagined that a religious fast was propitious to a religious dream; or to obtain the interpretation of one which had troubled their imagination. Peyssonel, who long resided among the Turks, observes, that their proverbs are full of sense, ingenuity, and elegance, the surest test of the intellectual abilities of any nation. He said this to correct the volatile opinion of De Tott, who, to convey an idea of their stupid pride, quotes one of their favourite adages, of which the truth and candour are admirable; "Riches in the Indies, wit in Europe, and pomp among the Ottomans."

The Spaniards may appeal to their proverbs to show that they were a high-minded and independent race. A Whiggish jealousy of the monarchical power stamped itself on this ancient one, *Va el rey hasta do puede, y no hasta do*

quiere: "The king goes as far as he is able, not as far as he desires." It must have been at a later period, when the national genius became more subdued, and every Spaniard dreaded to find under his own roof a spy or an informer, that another proverb arose, *Con el rey y la inquisicion, chiton!* "With the king and the inquisition, hush!" The gravity and taciturnity of the nation have been ascribed to the effects of this proverb. Their popular but suppressed feelings on taxation, and on a variety of dues exacted by their clergy, were murmured in proverbs—*Lo que no lleva Christo lleva el fisco!* "What Christ takes not, the exchequer carries away!" They have a number of sarcastic proverbs on the tenacious gripe of the "abad avariento," the avaricious priest, who, "having eaten the olio offered, claims the dish!" A striking mixture of chivalric habits, domestic decency, and epicurean comfort, appears in the Spanish proverb, *La muger y la salsa a la mano de la lança:* "The wife and the sauce by the hand of the lance;" to honour the dame, and to have the sauce near.

The Italian proverbs have taken a tinge from their deep and politic genius, and their wisdom

seems wholly concentrated in their personal interests. I think every tenth proverb, in an Italian collection, is some cynical or some selfish maxim: a book of the world for worldlings! The Venetian proverb *Pria Veneziani, poi Christiane:* "First Venetian, and then Christian!" condenses the whole spirit of their ancient Republic into the smallest space possible. Their political proverbs, no doubt, arose from the extraordinary state of a people, sometimes distracted among republics, and sometimes servile in petty courts. The Italian says, *I popoli s'ammazzano, ed i prencipi s'abbracciano:* "The people murder one another, and princes embrace one another." *Chi prattica co' grandi, l'ultimo à tavola, e'l primo a' strapazzi:* "Who dangles after the great is the last at table, and the first at blows." *Chi non sa adulare, non sa regnare:* "Who knows not to flatter, knows not to reign." *Chi serve in corte muore sul' pagliato:* "Who serves at court dies on straw." Wary cunning in domestic life is perpetually impressed. An Italian proverb, which is immortalized in our language, for it enters into the history of Milton, was that by which the elegant Wotton counselled the young poetic traveller to have—

Il viso sciolto, ed i pensieri stretti, "An open countenance, but close thoughts." In the same spirit, *Chi parla semina, chi tace raccoglie:* "The talker sows, the silent reaps;" as well as, *Fatti di miele, e ti mangieran le mosche:* "Make yourself all honey, and the flies will devour you." There are some which display a deep knowledge of human nature: *A Lucca ti vidi, à Pisa ti connobbi!* "I saw you at Lucca, I knew you at Pisa!" *Guardati d'aceto, di vin dolce:* "Beware of vinegar made of sweet wine," provoke not the rage of a patient man!

Among a people who had often witnessed their fine country devastated by petty warfare, their notion of the military character was not usually heroic. *Il soldato per far male è ben pagato:* "The soldier is well paid for doing mischief." *Soldato, acqua, e fuoco, presto si fan luoco:* "A soldier, fire, and water, soon make room for themselves." But in a poetical people, endowed with great sensibility, their proverbs would sometimes be tender and fanciful. They paint the activity of friendship, *Chi ha l'amor nel petto, ha lo sprone à i fianchi:* "Who feels love in the breast, feels a spur in his limbs;" or its generous passion, *Gli amici legono la borsa con un filo di ragnatelo:*

" Friends tie their purse with a cobweb's thread." They characterized the universal lover by an elegant proverb—*Appicare il Maio ad ogn'uscio:* " To hang every door with May;" alluding to the bough which in the nights of May the country-people are accustomed to plant before the door of their mistress. If we turn to the French, we discover that the military genius of France dictated the proverb, *Maille à maille se fait le haubergeon:* " Link by link is made the coat of mail;" and, *Tel coup de langue est pire qu'un coup de lance;* " The tongue strikes deeper than the lance;" and *Ce qui vient du tambour s'en retourne à la flute;* " What comes by the tabor goes back with the pipe." *Point d'argent point de Suisse* has become proverbial, observes an Edinburgh Reviewer; a striking expression, which, while French or Austrian gold predominated, was justly used to characterize the illiberal and selfish policy of the cantonal and federal governments of Switzerland, when it began to degenerate from its moral patriotism. The ancient, perhaps the extinct, spirit of Englishmen, was once expressed by our proverb, " Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion;" *i. e.*, the first of

the yeomanry rather than the last of the gentry. A foreign philosopher might have discovered our own ancient skill in archery among our proverbs; for none but true toxophilites could have had such a proverb as, "I will either make a shaft or a bolt of it!" signifying, says the author of Ivanhoe, a determination to make one use or other of the thing spoken of: the bolt was the arrow peculiarly fitted to the cross-bow, as that of the long-bow was called a shaft. These instances sufficiently demonstrate that the characteristic circumstances and feelings of a people are discovered in their popular notions, and stamped on their familiar proverbs.

It is also evident that the peculiar, and often idiomatic, humour of a people is best preserved in their proverbs. There is a shrewdness, although deficient in delicacy, in the Scottish proverbs; they are idiomatic, facetious, and strike home. Kelly, who has collected three thousand, informs us, that, in 1725, the Scotch were a great proverbial nation; for that few among the better sort will converse any considerable time, but will confirm every assertion and observation with a Scottish proverb. The speculative Scotch of

our own times have probably degenerated in prudential lore, and deem themselves much wiser than their proverbs. They may reply by a Scotch proverb on proverbs, made by a great man in Scotland, who, having given a splendid entertainment, was harshly told, that "Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them;" but he readily answered, "Wise men make proverbs, and fools repeat them!"

National humour, frequently local and idiomatical, depends on the artificial habits of mankind, so opposite to each other; but there is a natural vein, which the populace, always true to nature, preserve, even among the gravest people. The Arabian proverb, "The barber learns his art on the orphan's face;" the Chinese, "In a field of melons do not pull up your shoe; under a plum-tree do not adjust your cap;"—to impress caution in our conduct under circumstances of suspicion;—and the Hebrew one, "He that hath had one of his family hanged may not say to his neighbour, *hang* up this fish!" are all instances of this sort of humour. The Spaniards are a grave people, but no nation has equalled them in their peculiar humour. The genius of Cer-

vantes partook largely of that of his country; that mantle of gravity, which almost conceals its latent facetiousness, and with which he has imbued his style and manner with such untranslatable idiomatic raciness, may be traced to the proverbial erudition of his nation. "To steal a sheep, and give away the trotters for God's sake!" is Cervantic nature! To one who is seeking an opportunity to quarrel with another, their proverb runs, *Si quieres dar palos a su muger pidele al sol a bever*, "Hast thou a mind to quarrel with thy wife, bid her bring water to thee in the sunshine!"—a very fair quarrel may be picked up about the motes in the clearest water! On the judges in Gallicia, who, like our former justices of peace, "for half a dozen chickens would dispense with a dozen of penal statutes," *A juezes Gallicianos, con los pies en las manos:* "To the judges of Gallicia go with feet in hand;" a droll allusion to a present of poultry, usually held by the legs. To describe persons who live high without visible means, *Los que cabritos venden, y cabras no tienen, de donde los vienen?* "They that sell kids and have no goats, how came they by them?" *El vino no trae bragas*, "Wine wears no breeches;" for

men in wine expose their most secret thoughts. *Vino di un oreja,* "Wine of one ear!" is good wine; for at bad, shaking our heads, both our ears are visible; but at good, the Spaniard, by a natural gesticulation lowering one side, shows a single ear.

Proverbs abounding in sarcastic humour, and found among every people, are those which are pointed at rival countries. They expose some prevalent folly, or allude to some disgrace which the natives have incurred. In France, the Burgundians, have a proverb *Mieux vaut bon repas que bel habit;* "Better a good dinner than a fine coat." These good people are great gormandizers, but shabby dressers; they are commonly said to have "bowels of silk and velvet;" that is, all their silk and velvet goes for their bowels! Thus Picardy is famous for "hot heads:" and the Norman for *son dit et son dedit,* "his saying and his unsaying!" In Italy the numerous rival cities pelt one another with proverbs: *Chi ha a fare con Tosco non convien esser losco,* "He who deals with a Tuscan must not have his eyes shut." *A Venetia chi vi nasce, mal vi si pasce,* "Whom Venice breeds, she

poorly feeds."—Among ourselves, hardly has a county escaped from some popular quip; even neighbouring towns have their sarcasms, usually pickled in some unlucky rhyme. The egotism of man eagerly seizes on whatever serves to depreciate or to ridicule his neighbour: nations proverb each other; counties flout counties; obscure towns sharpen their wits on towns as obscure as themselves—the same evil principle lurking in poor human nature, if it cannot always assume predominance, will meanly gratify itself by insult or contempt.

There is another source of national characteristics, frequently producing strange or whimsical combinations; a people, from a very natural circumstance, have drawn their proverbs from local objects, or from allusions to peculiar customs. The influence of manners and customs over the ideas and language of a people would form a subject of extensive and curious research. There is a Japanese proverb, that "A fog cannot be dispelled with a fan!" Had we not known the origin of this proverb, it would be evident that it could only have occurred to a people who had constantly before them fogs and fans; and

the fact appears that fogs are frequent on the coast of Japan; and that from the age of five years both sexes of the Japanese carry fans. The Spaniards have an odd proverb to describe those who tease and vex a person before they do him the very benefit which they are about to confer—acting kindly, but speaking roughly; *Mostrar primero la horca que el lugar*, "To show the gallows before they show the town;" a circumstance alluding to their small towns, which have a gallows placed on an eminence, so that the gallows breaks on the eye of the traveller before he gets a view of the town itself.

The Cheshire proverb on marriage, "Better wed over the mixon than over the moor," that is, at home or in its vicinity; mixon alludes to the dung, *&c.*, in the farm-yard, while the road from Chester to London is over the moorland in Staffordshire: this local proverb is a curious instance of provincial pride, perhaps of wisdom, to induce the gentry of that county to form intermarriages; to prolong their own ancient families, and perpetuate ancient friendships between them.

In the Isle of Man a proverbial expression forcibly indicates the object constantly occu-

pying the minds of the inhabitants. The two Deemsters or judges, when appointed to the chair of judgment, declare they will render justice between man and man "as equally as the herring bone lies between the two sides:" an image which could not have occurred to any people unaccustomed to the herring-fishery. There is a Cornish proverb, "Those who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock"—the strands of Cornwall, so often covered with wrecks, could not fail to impress on the imaginations of its inhabitants the two objects from whence they drew this salutary proverb, against obstinate wrong-heads.

When Scotland, in the last century, felt its allegiance to England doubtful, and when the French sent an expedition to the land of cakes, a local proverb was revived, to show the identity of interests which affected both nations.

> "If Skiddaw hath a cap
> Scruffel wots full well of that."

These are two high hills, one in Scotland and one in England; so near, that what happens to the one will not be long ere it reach the

other. If a fog lodges on the one, it is sure to rain on the other; the mutual sympathies of the two countries were hence deduced in a copious dissertation, by Oswald Dyke, on what was called "The Union-proverb," which *local proverbs* of our country, Fuller has interspersed in his "Worthies," and Ray and Grose have collected separately.

I was amused lately by a curious financial revelation which I found in an opposition paper, where it appears that "Ministers pretend to make their load of taxes more portable, by shifting the burden, or altering the pressure, without, however, diminishing the weight; according to the Italian proverb, *Accommodare le bisaccie nella strada*, "To fit the load on the journey:"—it is taken from a custom of the mule-drivers, who, placing their packages at first but awkwardly on the backs of their poor beasts, and seeing them ready to sink, cry out, "Never mind! we must fit them better on the road!" I was gratified to discover, by the present and some other modern instances, that the taste for proverbs was reviving, and that we were returning to those sober times, when the aptitude of a sim-

ple proverb would be preferred to the verbosity of politicians, Tories, Whigs, or Radicals!

There are domestic proverbs which originate in incidents known only to the natives of their province. Italian literature is particularly rich in these stores. The lively proverbial taste of that vivacious people was transferred to their own authors; and when these allusions were obscured by time, learned Italians, in their zeal for their national literature, and in their national love of story-telling, have written grave commentaries even on ludicrous, but popular tales, in which the proverbs are said to have originated. They resemble the old facetious *contes*, whose simplicity and humour still live in the pages of Boccaccio, and are not forgotten in those of the Queen of Navarre.

The Italians apply a proverb to a person who while he is beaten, takes the blows quietly:—

Per beato ch' elle non furon pesche!
Luckily they were not peaches!"

And to threaten to give a man—

Una pesca in un occhio,
"A peach in the eye,"

means to give him a thrashing. This proverb, it is said, originated in the close of a certain droll adventure. The community of the Castle Poggibonsi, probably from some jocular tenure observed on St. Bernard's day, pay a tribute of peaches to the court of Tuscany, which are usually shared among the ladies in waiting, and the pages of the court. It happened one season, in a great scarcity of peaches, that the good people at Poggibonsi, finding them rather dear, sent, instead of the customary tribute, a quantity of fine juicy figs, which was so much disapproved of by the pages, that as soon as they got hold of them, they began in rage to empty the baskets on the heads of the ambassadors of the Poggibonsi, who, in attempting to fly as well as they could from the pulpy shower, half-blinded, and recollecting that peaches would have had stones in them, cried out—

Per beato ch' elle non furon pesche!
"Luckily they were not peaches!"

Fare le scalée di Sant' Ambrogio; "To mount the stairs of Saint Ambrose," a proverb allusive to the business of the school of scandal. Varchi

explains it by a circumstance so common in provincial cities. On summer evenings, for fresh air and gossip, the loungers met on the steps and landing-places of the church of St. Ambrose: whoever left the party, "they read in his book," as our commentator expresses it; and not a leaf was passed over! All liked to join a party so well informed of one another's concerns, and every one tried to be the very last to quit it,—not "to leave his character behind!" It became a proverbial phrase with those who left a company, and were too tender of their backs, to request they would not "mount the stairs of St. Ambrose." Jonson has well described such a company:

> "You are so truly fear'd, but not beloved
> One of another, as no one dares break
> Company from the rest, lest they should fall
> Upon him absent."

There are legends and histories which belong to proverbs; and some of the most ancient refer to incidents which have not always been commemorated. Two Greek proverbs have accidentall been explained by Pausanias: "He is a man of Tenedos!" to describe a person of unquestionable

veracity; and "To cut with the Tenedian axe;" to express an absolute and irrevocable refusal. The first originated in a king of Tenedos, who decreed that there should always stand behind the judge a man holding an axe, ready to execute justice on any one convicted of falsehood. The other arose from the same king, whose father having reached his island, to supplicate the son's forgiveness for the injury inflicted on him by the arts of a step-mother, was preparing to land; already the ship was fastened by its cable to a rock; when the son came down, and sternly cutting the cable with an axe, sent the ship adrift to the mercy of the waves: hence, "to cut with the Tenedian axe," became proverbial to express an absolute refusal. "Business to-morrow!" is another Greek proverb, applied to a person ruined by his own neglect. The fate of an eminent person perpetuated the expression which he casually employed on the occasion. One of the Theban polemarchs, in the midst of a convivial party, received despatches relating to a conspiracy: flushed with wine, although pressed by the courier to open them immediately, he smiled, and in gaiety laying the letter under the pillow

of his couch, observed, "Business to-morrow!" Plutarch records that he fell a victim to the twenty-four hours he had lost, and became the author of a proverb which was still circulated among the Greeks.

The philosophical antiquary may often discover how many a proverb commemorates an event which has escaped from the more solemn monuments of history, and is often the solitary authority of its existence. A national event in Spanish history is preserved by a proverb. *Y vengar quiniento sueldos;* "And revenge five hundred pounds!" An odd expression to denote a person being a gentleman! But the proverb is historical. The Spaniards of Old Castile were compelled to pay an annual tribute of five hundred maidens to their masters, the Moors; after several battles, the Spaniards succeeded in compromising the shameful tribute, by as many pieces of coin: at length the day arrived when they entirely emancipated themselves from this odious imposition. The heroic action was performed by men of distinction, and the event perpetuated in the recollections of the Spaniards, by this singular expression, which alludes to the dishonourable

tribute, was applied to characterize all men of high honour, and devoted lovers of their country.

Pasquier, in his *Recherches sur la France,* reviewing the periodical changes of ancient families in feudal times, observes, that a proverb among the common people conveys the result of all his inquiries; for those noble houses, which in a single age declined from nobility and wealth to poverty and meanness, gave rise to the proverb, *Cent ans bannieres et cent ans civieres!* "One hundred years a banner, and one hundred years a barrow!" The Italian proverb, *Con l' Evangilio si diventa heretico,* "With the gospel we become heretics,"—reflects the policy of the court of Rome; and must be dated at the time of the Reformation, when a translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue encountered such an invincible opposition. The Scotch proverb, *He that invented the maiden first hanselled it;* that is, got the first of it! The maiden is that well-known beheading engine, revived by the French surgeon Guillotine. This proverb may be applied to one who falls a victim to his own ingenuity; the artificer of his own destruction! The inventor was James, Earl of Morton, who

for some years governed Scotland, and afterwards, it is said, very unjustly suffered by his own invention. It is a striking coincidence, that the same fate was shared by the French reviver; both alike sad examples of disturbed times! Among our own proverbs a remarkable incident has been commemorated; *Hand over head, as men took the Covenant!* This preserves the manner in which the Scotch covenant, so famous in our history, was violently taken by above sixty thousand persons about Edinburgh, in 1638; a circumstance at that time novel in our own revolutionary history, and afterwards paralleled by the French in voting by "acclamation." An ancient English proverb preserves a curious fact concerning our coinage. *Testers are gone to Oxford, to study at Brazen-nose.* When Henry the Eighth debased the silver coin, called *testers*, from their having a head stamped on each side; the brass, breaking out in red pimples on their silver faces, provoked the ill-humour of the people to vent itself in this punning proverb, which has preserved for the historical antiquary the popular feeling which lasted about fifty years, till Elizabeth reformed the state of the coinage.

A northern proverb among us has preserved the remarkable idea which seems to have once been prevalent; that the metropolis of England was to be the city of York: *Lincoln was, London is, York shall be!* Whether at the time of the union of the crowns, under James the First, when England and Scotland became Great Britain, this city, from its centrical situation, was considered as the best adapted for the seat of government, or from some other cause which I have not discovered, this notion must have been prevalent to have entered into a proverb. The chief magistrate of York is the only provincial one who is allowed the title of Lord Mayor; a circumstance which seems connected with this proverb.

The Italian history of its own small principalities, whose well-being so much depended on their prudence and sagacity, affords many instances of the timely use of a proverb. Many an intricate negotiation has been contracted through a good-humoured proverb,—many a sarcastic one has silenced an adversary; and sometimes they have been applied on more solemn, and even tragical occasions. When Rinaldo degli

Albizzi was banished by the vigorous conduct of Cosmo de' Medici, Machiavel tells us, the expelled man sent Cosmo a menace, in a proverb, *La gallina covava!* "The hen is brooding!" said of one meditating vengeance. The undaunted Cosmo replied by another, that "There was no brooding out of the nest!"

I give an example of peculiar interest; for it is perpetuated by Dante, and is connected with the character of Milton.

When the families of the Amadei and the Uberti felt their honour wounded in the affront the younger Buondelmonte had put upon them, in breaking off his match with a young lady of their family, by marrying another, a council was held, and the death of the young cavalier was proposed as the sole atonement for their injured honour. But the consequences which they anticipated, and which afterwards proved so fatal to the Florentines, long suspended their decision. At length Moscha Lamberti suddenly rising, exclaimed, in two proverbs, "That those who considered every thing would never conclude on any thing!" closing with an ancient proverbial saying —*cosa fatta capo ha!* "a deed done has an end!"

This proverb sealed the fatal determination, and was long held in mournful remembrance by the Tuscans; for, according to Villani, it was the cause and beginning of the accursed factions of the Guelphs and the Ghibellins. Dante has thus immortalized the energetic expression in a scene of the "Inferno."

> Ed un ch 'avea l'una e l'altra man mozza
> Levando i moncherin per l'aura fosca;
> Si che 'l sangue facea la faccia sozza
> Grido—" Ricorderati ancor del Mosca
> Che disse, lasso *capo ô, cosa fatta;*
> Che fu'l mal seme della gente Tosca."

> ———————Then one
> Maim'd of each hand, uplifted in the gloom
> The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots
> Sullied his face, and cried—" Remember thee
> Of Mosca too—I who, alas! exclaim'd,
> ' The deed once done, there is an end '—that proved
> A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."
>
> *Cary's Dante.*

This Italian proverb was adopted by Milton; for when deeply engaged in writing "the Defence of the People," and warned that it might terminate in his blindness, he resolvedly concluded his work, exclaiming with great magnanimity

although the fatal prognostication had been accomplished, *cosa fatta capo ha!* Did this proverb also influence his awful decision on that great national event, when the most honest-minded fluctuated between doubts and fears?

Of a person treacherously used, the Italian proverb says that he has eaten of

> *Le frutte di fratre Alberigo.*
> The Fruit of brother Alberigo.

Landino, on the following passage of Dante, preserves the tragic story:

> ———Io son fratre Alberigo,
> Io son quel dalle frutta del mal orto
> Che qui reprendo, *&c.*
>
> Canto xxxiii.

> " The friar Alberigo," answered he,
> " Am I, who from the evil garden pluck'd
> " Its fruitage, and am here repaid the date
> " More luscious for my fig."
>
> *Cary's Dante.*

This was Manfred, the lord of Fuenza, who, after many cruelties, turned friar. Reconciling himself to those whom he had so often opposed, to celebrate the renewal of their friendship, he

invited them to a magnificent entertainment. At the end of the dinner the horn blew to announce the dessert—but it was the signal of this dissimulating conspirator!—and the fruits which that day were served to his guests were armed men, who rushing in, immolated their victims.

Among these historical proverbs none are more interesting than those which perpetuate national events, connected with those of another people. When a Frenchman would let us understand that he has settled with his creditors, the proverb is, *J' ai payé tous mes Anglois:* "I have paid all my English." This proverb originated when John, the French king, was taken prisoner by our Black Prince. Levies of money were made for the king's ransom, and for many French lords; and the French people have thus perpetuated the military glory of our nation, and their own idea of it, by making the *English* and their *creditors* synonymous terms. Another relates to the same event—*Ore le Pape est devenu François, et Jesu Christ Anglais:* "Now the Pope is become French and Jesus Christ English;" a proverb which arose when the Pope, exiled from Rome, held his court at Avignon in France; and

the English prospered so well, that they possessed more than half the kingdom. The Spanish proverb concerning England is well known—

Con todo el mondo guerra,
Y paz con Inglaterra!
"War with the world,
And peace with England!"

Whether this proverb was one of the results of their memorable armada, and was only coined after their conviction of the splendid folly which they had committed, I cannot ascertain. England must always have been a desirable ally to Spain against her potent rival and neighbour. The Italians have a proverb, which formerly, at least, was strongly indicative of the travelled Englishman in their country, *Inglese Italianato è un diavolo incarnato;* "The Italianized Englishman is a devil incarnate." Formerly there existed a closer intercourse between our country and Italy than with France. Before and during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, that land of the elegant arts modelled our taste and manners; and more Italians travelled into England, and were more constant residents, from commercial concerns, than afterwards when France assumed

a higher rank in Europe by her political superiority. This cause will sufficiently account for the number of Italian proverbs relating to England, which show an intimacy with our manners which could not else have occurred. It was probably some sarcastic Italian, and, perhaps, horologer, who, to describe the disagreement of persons, proverbed our nation—"They agree like the clocks of London!" We were once better famed for merry Christmasses and their pies; and it must have been Italians who had been domiciliated with us who gave currency to the proverb —*Ha piu da fare che i forni di natale in Inghilterra;* "He has more business than English ovens at Christmas." Our pie-loving gentry were notorious, and Shakespeare's folio was usually laid open in the great halls of our nobility to entertain their attendants, who devoured at once Shakespeare and their pasty. Some of those volumes have come down to us, not only with the stains, but enclosing even the identical pie-crusts of the Elizabethan age,

I have thus attempted to develop THE ART OF READING PROVERBS; but have done little more

than indicate the theory, and must leave the skilful student to the delicacy of the practice. I am anxious to rescue from prevailing prejudices these neglected stores of curious amusement, and of deep insight into the ways of man, and to point out the bold and concealed truths which are scattered in these collections. There seems to be no occurrence in human affairs to which some proverb may not be applied. All knowledge was long aphoristical and traditional, pithily contracting the discoveries which were to be instantly comprehended, and easily retained. Whatever be the revolutionary state of man, similar principles and like occurrences are returning on us; and antiquity, whenever it is justly applicable to our times, loses its denomination, and becomes the truth of our own age. A proverb will often cut the knot which others in vain are attempting to untie. Johnson, palled with the redundant elegancies of modern composition, once said, "I fancy mankind may come in time to write all aphoristically, except in narrative; grow weary of preparation, and connexion, and illustration, and all those arts by which a big

book is made." Many a volume indeed has often been written to demonstrate, what a lover of proverbs could show had long been ascertained by a single one in his favourite collections.

An insurmountable difficulty which every paræmiographer has encountered, is that of forming an apt, a ready, and a systematic classification: the moral Linnæus of such a "systema naturæ" has not yet appeared, Each discovered his predecessor's mode imperfect, but each was doomed to meet the same fate. The arrangement of proverbs has baffled the ingenuity of every one of their collectors. Our RAY, after long premeditation, has chosen a system with the appearance of an alphabetical order; but, as it turns out, his system is no system, and his alphabet is no alphabet. After ten years' labour, the good man could only arrange his proverbs by common-places—by complete sentences—by phrases or forms of speech—by proverbial similes —and so on, All these are pursued in alphabetical order, "by the first letter of the most 'material word,' or, if there be more words '*equally material*,' by that which usually stands foremost," The most patient examiner will usu-

ally find that he wants the sagacity of the collector to discover that word which is "the most material," or "the words equally material." We have to search through all that multiplicity of divisions, or conjuring-boxes, in which this juggler of proverbs pretends to hide the ball.

A still more formidable objection against a collection of proverbs, for the impatient reader, is their unreadableness. Taking in succession a multitude of insulated proverbs, their slippery nature resists all hope of retaining one in a hundred; the study of proverbs must be a frequent recurrence to a gradual collection of favourite ones, which we ourselves must form. The experience of life will throw a perpetual freshness over these short and simple texts; every day may furnish a new commentary; and we may grow old, and find novelty in proverbs by their perpetual application.

There are, perhaps, about twenty thousand proverbs among the nations of Europe: many of these have spread in their common intercourse; many are borrowed from the ancients, chiefly the Greeks, who themselves largely took them from the Eastern nations. Our own proverbs are

too often deficient in that elegance and ingenuity which are often found in the Spanish and the Italian. Proverbs frequently enliven conversation, or enter into the business of life in those countries, without any feeling of vulgarity being associated with them; they are too numerous, too witty, and too wise, to cease to please by their poignancy and their aptitude. I have heard them fall from the lips of men of letters and of statesmen. When recently the disorderly state of the manufacturers of Manchester menaced an insurrection, a profound Italian politician observed to me, that it was not of a nature to alarm a great nation; for that the remedy was at hand, in the proverb of the Lazzaroni of Naples, *Metà consiglio, metà esempio, metà denaro!* "Half advice, half example, half money!" The result confirmed the truth of the proverb, which, had it been known at the time, might have quieted the honest fears of a great part of the nation.

Proverbs have ceased to be studied, or employed in conversation, since the time we have derived our knowledge from books; but in a philosophical age they appear to offer infinite sub-

jects for speculative curiosity: originating in various æras, these memorials of manners, of events, and of modes of thinking, for historical as well as for moral purposes, still retain a strong hold on our attention. The collected knowledge of successive ages, and of different people, must always enter into some part of our own! Truth and nature can never be obsolete.

Proverbs embrace the wide sphere of human existence, they take all the colours of life, they are often exquisite strokes of genius, they delight by their airy sarcasm or their caustic satire, the luxuriance of their humour, the playfulness of their turn, and even by the elegance of their imagery, and the tenderness of their sentiment. They give a deep insight into domestic life, and open for us the heart of man, in all the various states which he may occupy—a frequent review of Proverbs should enter into our readings; and although they are no longer the ornaments of conversation, they have not ceased to be the treasures of Thought!

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

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